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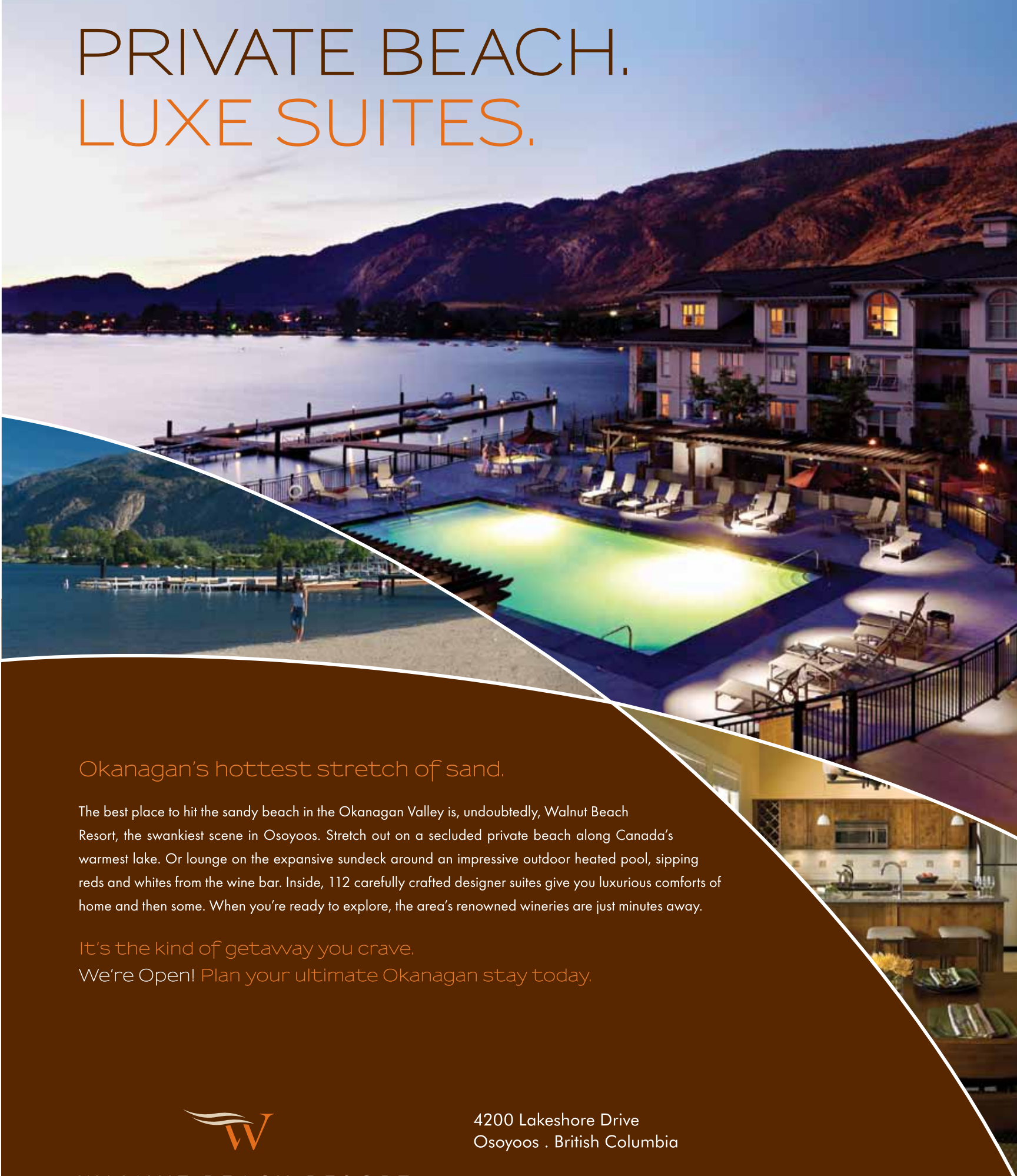

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Summer 2010

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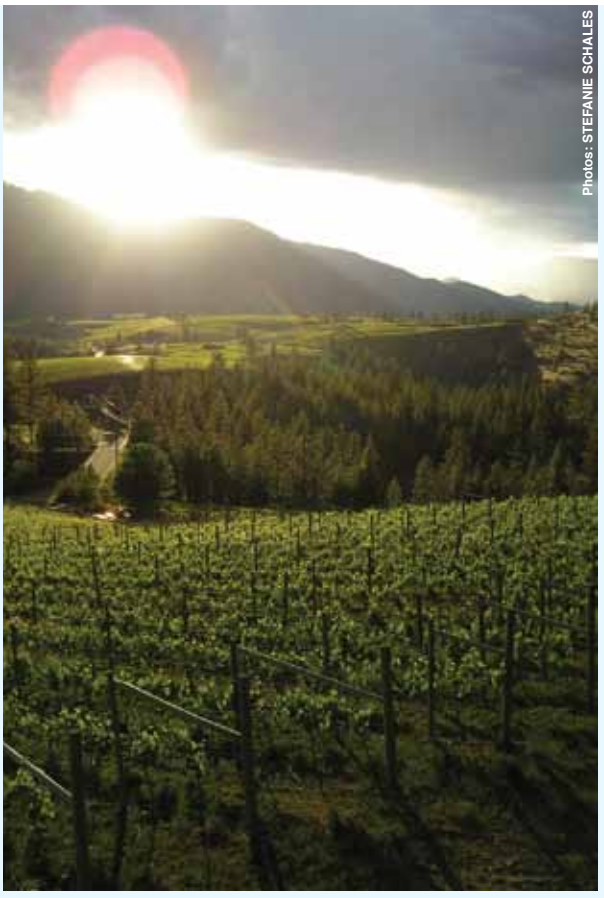
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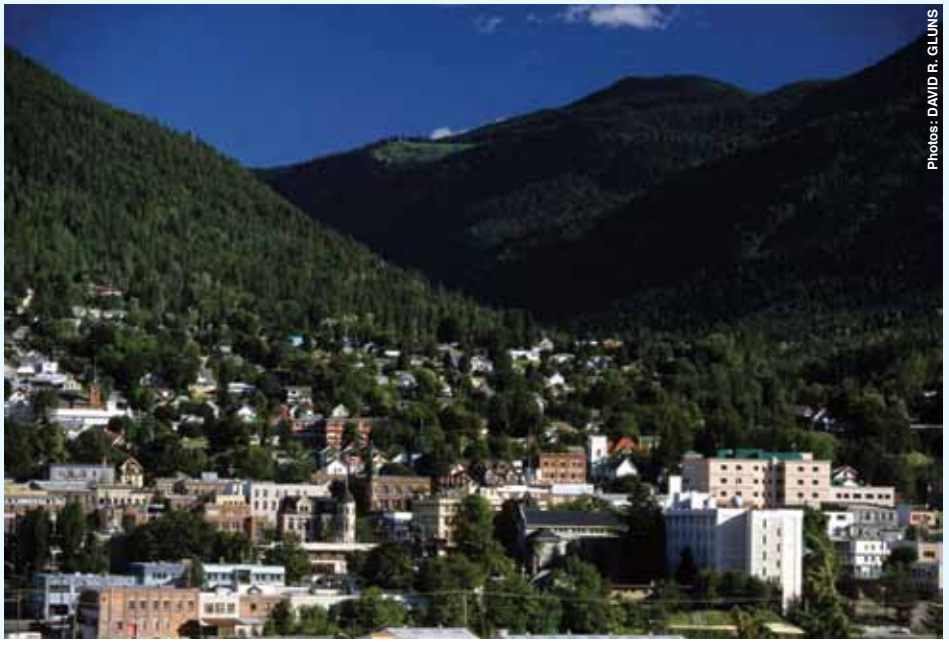
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Andrew Findlay

Freelance journalist Andrew Findlay is a proud new father to his baby girl, Zola. His 2009 story about the fascinating wolves of coastal BC, *Howl In the Mist*, earned a Northern Lights Award, while his expose of a backcountry tragedy, *Out of Bounds*, was recently nominated for a National Magazine Award. In this issue, Andrew employs his award-winning talent to explore the burgeoning culinary scene in Nelson.

Ingo Grady

As a professional oenophile and wine educator, Ingo is deeply supportive of individuals who pursue their passion for wine, especially when the journey is as arduous as becoming a Master of Wine (MW). Ingo salutes our regular contributor, Rhys Pender, MW.

Lisa Harrison

Lisa continues her travels through the Okanagan discovering winery getaways and vineyard accommodations and experiencing a pampered stay in Hester Creek Villas. Lisa joins fellow guests at a special event: a cooking class by Chef Roger Planiden in the winery's state-of-the-art demonstration kitchen. Her learning continues testing recipes and reviewing cookbooks from the ski resort of Whitewater to the spa resort of Silver Hills Health Centre.

Chef Steve Marston

Chef Marston reviews dinner at Willi Franz's Grapevine Restaurant at Gray Monk Estate Winery. As the 2004 recipient of Bermuda's Chef of the Year award, Marston appreciates all the elements required to achieve a sterling review and Chef Willi, former president of the Okanagan Chefs' Association, delivers.

Rhys Pender

Rhys is a wine educator, consultant, judge, freelance writer and a regular contributor. He recently became Canada's youngest Master of Wine (MW). In 2008, Rhys was named one of the Top 40 Foodies Under 40 in Western Canada by Western Living magazine. His career plan is to wait for Robert Parker to retire so he can finally claim back his initials RP for wine reviews. In the meantime, Rhys examines the organic wine industry and provides tasting notes on the wines they produce.

Helene Scott

With more than 20 years experience as a wine educator and writer in South Africa and the Okanagan Valley, Helene loves to share a glass of wine and a great meal with friends. She is also the Bailli of the Chaine de Rotisseurs of the Okanagan Valley. Helene introduces Summer Sippers to our tasting notes as well as some new wines from the Creston Valley.

guest columnist

Scott Fraser, Chairman of the BC Wine Institute

Scott Fraser is also the vice president of Estate Wines in Western Canada for Andrew Peller Limited. He began working in the import side of the wine business in 1987, before BC was known for producing quality wines and has continued selling BC wines since the inception of the BCWI and VQA.

SAVOUR
Gourmet Okanagan Style

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Publisher	Chytra M. Brown
Managing Editor	Joyce D. Wegner
Art Director	Donna Szelest
Contributors	Roslyne Buchanan Andrew Findlay Ingo Grady Lisa Harrison Julianna Hayes Chef Steve Marston Rhys Pender Helene Scott Dona Sturmanis
Cover Photograph by	Shawn Talbot
Account Managers	Kathie Nickel Murray Hicks
National Sales	Jesse Kunicky
Administration	Joanne Clarke

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101B-1979 Old Okanagan Hwy.
West Kelowna, BC V4T 3A4
P: 778-755-5727 F: 778-755-5728

President	Craig N. Brown
Vice President	Noll C. Derriksan Grand Chief WFN, U.B.C.I.C.

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letter from the editor
Summer 2010

It was summertime last year when I joined publishers Chytra and Craig Brown for a patio lunch to discuss the concept of Savour Magazine. The mandate — to feature a wide range of interests in our thriving culinary and wine scenes. And in the process, we are creating long-lasting partnerships to support the businesses throughout the valley.

Our Dine with Savour event is a successful example of supporting our local restaurants and wineries during the quieter months. In addition, we belong to organizations such as the Okanagan Chefs' Association, the Okanagan Wine Festivals Society, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and the Chefs' Table Society in Vancouver as well as various wine associations throughout the valley. Savour is an avid supporter of both local and BC wide events. Because of our commitment to the region, our publisher, Chytra Brown, was recently appointed to the committee for the Gold Medal Plates competition scheduled to take place in February 2011.

At Savour, we strive to be in the forefront of industry trends. Consequently, we are introducing our readers to the burgeoning culinary and wine scene of our neighbouring region – the Kootenays. Award-winning writer *Andrew Findlay* explores culinary delights in Nelson and interviews cookbook author Shelley Adams, Whitewater Cooks at Home. In our recipe section, there are summer-inspired selections from this cookbook for our readers enjoyment. Also, *Helene Scott* recommends Summer Sippers in her tasting notes plus two relatively new wineries in the Creston Valley.

We've come a long way since our initial discussions last summer. Savour Magazine is now a national publication presenting the best of our region to the rest of our country and beyond. Our partners and advertisers appreciate our commitment to our journalistic integrity and we value their continued support. It is our unique recipe for success.

Enjoy the summer!

Joyce D Wegner

Joyce D. Wegner
Managing Editor
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Nota Bene

Tasting Experience

Join us at Black Hills Estate Winery for an exceptional experience in our new Vineyard Ultralounge. Immerse yourself in our terroir and gain a true appreciation for the craftsmanship that goes into our wines.

Enjoy tastings of all of our current vintages, including our sold out Nota Bene, Carmenere, Alibi, Viogner and Chardonnay. Plus a "sneak peek" barrel tasting of our upcoming Syrah. You will enjoy your experience with a small group of 12 or fewer guests, and will be guided & entertained by our resident "Wine Evangelist"

The Tasting Experience takes place Thursday through Sunday at your choice of an 11 am or 2 pm start time. Only $20 per person and reservations are a must.

For details and reservations,
please contact (250) 498-0666 or visit

www.blackhillswinery.com

Swirl
Summer 2010

by Joyce D Wegner

Thanks to all the invitations since our last edition. Our calendar sprang to life in mid-April starting with **Culinaria at Watermark Beach Resort** in Osoyoos. Hosted by the **South Okanagan Chamber of Commerce**, Culinaria was a culmination of wine and food tasting, cooking demonstrations, an Iron Chef competition and a live auction. Executive chef **Jesse Croy** of **Summerhill Pyramid Winery**, competing against executive chef **Roger Planiden**, took home the Iron Chef title.

Culinaria's Media Tour and Tasting at Burrowing Owl

The following day, **The South Okanagan Winery Association** invited a myriad of renowned wine writers to participate in its annual **Banée** event at **Spirit Ridge Resort** in Osoyoos. The media group experienced a guided viticultural tour of vineyards in the Oliver area. A mid-day break featured a wine-paired lunch at **Walnut Beach Resort** and an innovative "speed wine tasting" to ensure every media representative spent a minimum of five minutes at each of the association winery's tasting tables.

The day ended with the 7th annual **Banée** dinner with an impressive number of winemakers, growers and wine enthusiasts in attendance.

Wine pioneer **Harry McWatters,** founder of **Sumac Ridge Estate Winery, Vintage Consulting Group Inc.** and the **Okanagan Wine Academy,** was inducted as the new president. **John** and **Lynn Bremmer,** well known for their active and enduring role in viticulture in the South Okanagan, were honoured at the event. Formerly a private affair, this celebration of the new wine season is now open to the public.

Thanks to everyone who stopped at our booth at the **WestJet Wine Tasting** evenings during the **Okanagan Spring Wine Festival.** We enjoy participating at events, especially when we have the opportunity to meet our readers. Congratulations to **Glen McMillan,** who won our prize of a Margarita blender provided by **Brugman Commercial Kitchens** at **Taste of Kelowna.**

DOWN AND DIRTY

Ingrid Jarrett, general manager, **Watermark Beach Resort,** deserves kudos for creating an enticing culinary series – **The Down and Dirty.** Watermark's chef de cuisine, **Natasha Schooten,** acts as tour guide for this once a month excursion to the farms, vineyards, and wineries in the Similkameen Valley, Canada's organic capital.

Harvesting organic greens at Harker's Farm

Ingrid invited a few media and tourism specialists to participate in this extraordinary event.

The highlights of our experience included a tour of **Harker's Organic Farm and Rustic Roots Winery** where we sampled some deliciously dry fruit wines and picked our own greens for a farm-fresh lunch, alfresco style, lovingly prepared by Chef Natasha.

Plus a picturesque detour along the country back roads to organic **Covert Farms** and **Dunham & Froese Winery** protected by the shadow of McIntyre Bluff. The Covert family have tilled their fields for over 50 years and are leaders in quality fruit and vegetable production in the Okanagan. U-pick options are also available for visitors eager to get Down and Dirty in this unique farm experience. Tours are $70 a person.

Jessie Campbell, Ellen Matthews & Ingrid Jarrett enjoy the scenery at Covert Farms

Dine With Savour at the Vanilla Pod

Our **Dine with Savour** event at The Vanilla Pod in Summerland was outstanding. **Owners Paul and Sheila Jones,** with executive chef **Bruno Terroso,** created a memorable meal featuring a collection of wines from the Summerland area. Local author **Leonne Wilson-Jones,** Define Your Own Simple Luxuries, joined us and provided autographed copies of her book. Stay tuned for our next event happening in the fall.

We were introduced to **CupCasions** at Leonne's book launch and couldn't resist sampling the bite-sized pretty cakes. They now offer gluten-free cupcakes for sensitive stomachs, celebrations-size cupcakes for special occasions and cookies with corporate cookie packages. These "handheld dessert specialists" are a local success story.

If you're travelling to Summerland, take the time to turn off Highway 97 to visit **Bonitas Winery.** This hidden gem with a Mediterranean-style tasting room also offers a private guest suite, an event facility with a full-service kitchen and outstanding views. Plus, their wines recently won two awards in **Kelowna's Cellars of the World 2010** wine competition.

View from Bonitas Winery

During the summer, the winery also offers **heli-tours** and **wine tastings** in partnership with **Northern Air Support,** departing from Kelowna Airport.

There are many other hidden-gem wineries in the Okanagan and a great resource for discovering them is well-known wine writer and author **John Schreiner's** third edition of the **Okanagan Wine Tour Guide.** This comprehensive book offers maps, detailed listings with an A-Z reference complete with winery descriptions, contact information, and John's knowledgeable "My Pick" selections for wine enthusiasts.

New chair of the Association of BC Winegrowers Evelyn Campbell who, along with her husband, owns and operates **Blasted Church Winery** has been elected chair of the association. She succeeds Ian Mavety of Blue Mountain Winery, who served as chair for three years.

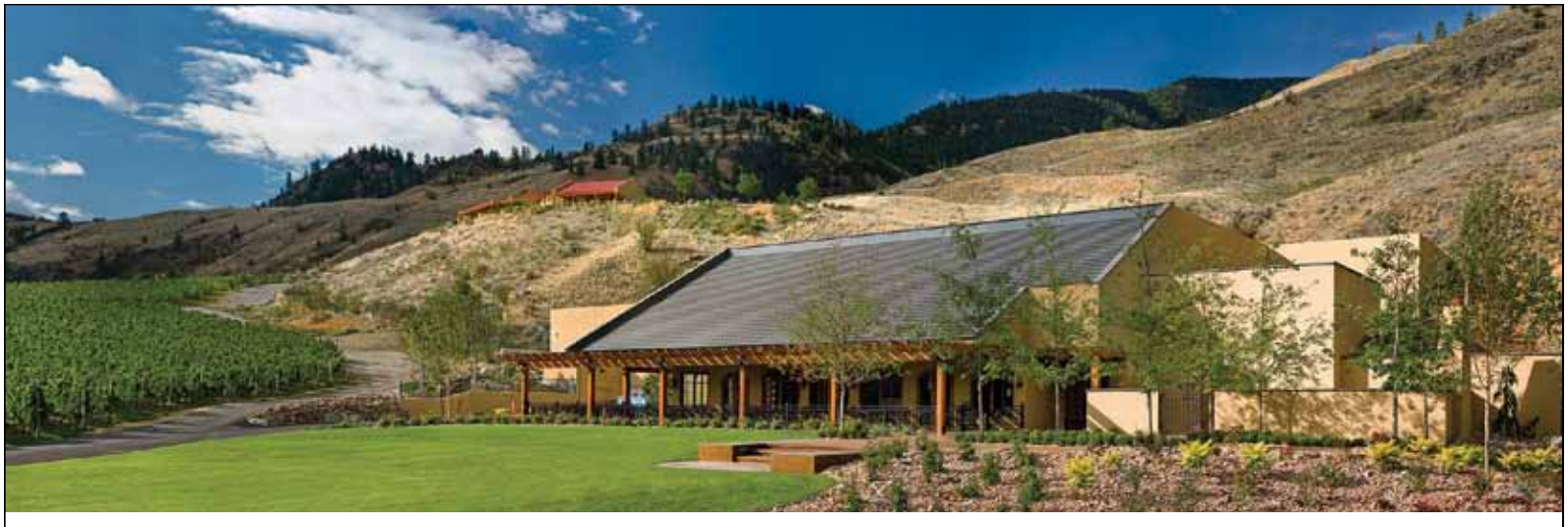
"Simple, honest food and wine," is owner **Michael Gauthier's** description of his new restaurant, **LePlateau Bistro,** tucked into the corner of Tutt Street Square. Classic Boeuf Bourguignon on the lunch menu paired with Dona Dominga Carmenere/Cabernet Sauvignon was a delicious distraction on a dismal rainy day. "There's a word in French: dépaysement. It's what happens when you feel like you're somewhere else for a while, and that's the atmosphere I strive to create every day," explains Michael. From our experience, Michael definitely has achieved his ambition in this petit version of Paris.

Photo: SAVOUR MAGAZINE

Darren Mitchell and Michael Gauthier - LePlateau Bistro

CENTRE STAGE IN THE VINEYARDS

This summer will spotlight some outstanding talent at our wineries. **Mission Hill Family Winery** Concert Series welcomes **WIL CAMPA** Afro-Cuban Jazz, Aug. 7, Juno Award-winning guitarist **JESSE COOK,** Sept. 3, and **CANADIAN TENORS,** Sept. 18, – **www.missionhillwinery.com**



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Cedar Creek Estate Winery Sunset Concert Series has **VONDA SHEPARD,** as featured on Ally McBeal, on July 22, two-time Juno Award-winning artist **CHANTAL KREVIAZUK** will perform Aug. 5, and **JESSIE FARRELL,** Artist of the Year at the Canadian Country Music Awards, Aug. 19. – **www.cedarcreek.bc.ca**

Tinhorn Creek Winery Canadian Concert Series hosts **WIDE MOUTH MASON,** July 30, **LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST** - The Shakespeare Company, July 31, **DUSTIN BENTALL,** Aug. 28, and **BEDOUIN SOUNDCLASH,** Sept. 11 – **www.tinhorn.com**

Manteo Resort

CONGRATULATIONS! Manteo Resort has been ranked among the world's best hotels on the **2010 Expedia Insiders' Select List**. A resort gem in the Okanagan, Manteo scored an impressive 99.4 out of 100 and was ranked 149 on this prestigious list, from a field of more than one million competitors.

OSOYOOS CELEBRITY WINE FESTIVAL

The novel competition, **The Vinos**, the world's first wine commercial film festival, blends creativity in the vineyards with performance in the bottle and captures the results in 60-90 second videos. More than 30 entries focused on Okanagan wine that ranged from hilarious, to musical, to inspiring, entered the competition for prizes up to $5,000 plus wine. **After attending this year's events, the Savour Team is inspired for next year.**

Editor Joyce Wegner with celebrity Jason Priestley

A Little More Local by Vancouver filmmakers, Barbara Kozicki, Fiona Mongillo, and Charles Hefferman took the top prize. Second prize went to **Half Corked** by Ashley Forshaw and Tibor Farkas. Third prize was **With BC Wine We Are Kings** by Adrian Talens and Mark Armstrong. To view all the entries, check http://thevinos.paulcottonfilms.com.

We thoroughly enjoyed the festivities. **The Celebrity VIP Reception and Beach Party** at the **Walnut Beach Hotel** offered friendly introductions to **Jason Priestley,** (Beverley Hills 90210), **Bruce Greenwood,** (The Sweet Hereafter, Rules of Engagement, Double Jeopardy, etc) and **Steven Page** (solo artist and founder of the Bare Naked Ladies) who were all thrilled to return to the Okanagan for this event. Greenwood's high-school sweetheart and wife, **Susan Devlin,** shared her fond memories of visiting Osoyoos with her family in the 1970s.

The classic **Nota Bene Release Party** at **Black Hills Winery** was a sold-out success with savoury samples from Gold Plate Medal Winner executive chef **Michael Lyon,** Hotel Eldorado, and executive chef **James DeLong** from celebrity chef **Ned Bell's** Cabana Grill restaurant.

ROLL OUT THOSE LAZY, HAZY, CRAZY DAYS OF SUMMER.

-nat king cole

Summer is finally here and Chef Butters is cranking up the heat in his kitchen at RauDZ© using the amazing products from here in the heart of the Okanagan. Red veined spinach grown exclusively for him by Second Wind Farms, the freshest seafood from Codfathers and seasonal fruits and vegetables from all over the valley find their place in his ever changing seasonal menu. At RauDZ© we love these crazy days of summer!

- Chef Butters and Audrey Surrao

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Craig Brown & Chytra Brown with celebrity Bruce Greenwood

Glenn Fawcett of Black Hills Winery at Note Bené Party

Paired with a selection of Black Hill's premium wines, including their famous Note Bené, the event boasted a convivial atmosphere with live entertainment and a feast of celebrity sightings.

The weekend's premier event, the Charity Auction with celebrity auctioneers **Terry David Mulligan** and **Jason Priestley** and a live musical appearance by **Stephen Page,**

Steven Page Performing at Charity Auction

was a resounding success, raising thousands of dollars for BC charities.

Thank you to all of our industry supporters who invite us to participate, co-sponsor, or volunteer at the many, many events that thrive in our Okanagan Valley. Our busy calendar is a testament to our mandate to inform, inspire, and educate our readers.

Your feedback is important to us.

Let us know how we're doing or share your experiences preparing our featured recipes. We may publish your comments in our next issue.

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The Naramata Bench Wineries ASSOCIATION & SAVOUR MAGAZINE

have teamed up this year...

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Buy your Tailgate Party tickets today! Tickets bought before August 16 will be entered to win a prize package including: 2 free tickets*; accommodation for 2 in Naramata on Sept. 11; a patio lunch for 2 at Lake Breeze Winery; and 2 bottles of wine from Lake Breeze.

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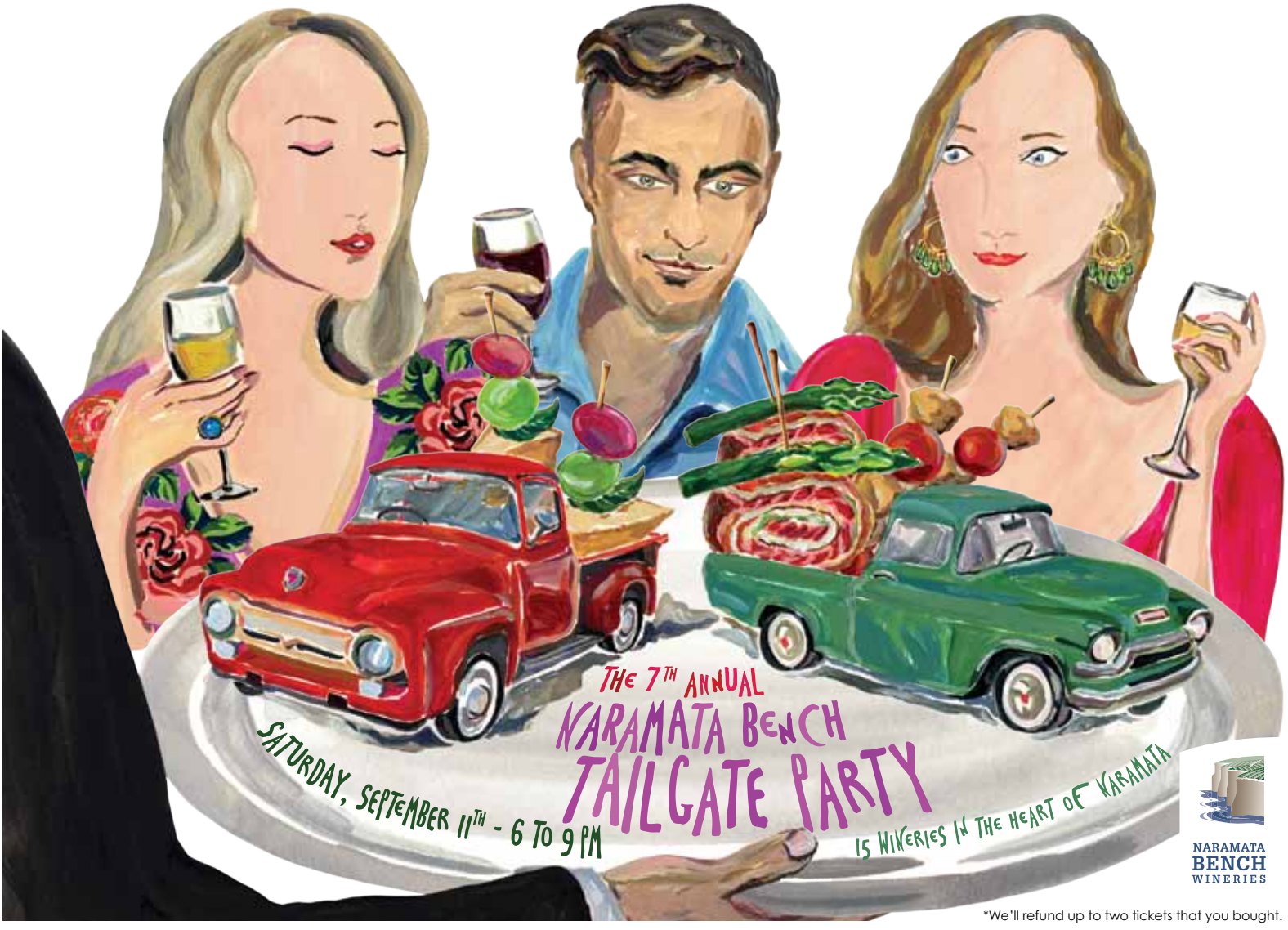

NARAMATA BENCH WINERIES

*We'll refund up to two tickets that you bought.

THE Family Business

the second-hand genes of our Okanagan vintners

By Julianna Hayes

GRAY MONK ESTATE WINERY

The second generation of the family that runs Gray Monk Estate Winery has reached an age where retirement is front of mind. There's only one problem. The first generation still works there.

Founders Trudy and George Heiss have to remind their children there is a natural order of things. "We get to retire first," Trudy says with a laugh.

Gray Monk is the longest-standing, family-owned winery in the Okanagan. It was among the original 10 wine producers and is the only one still run by the same owners.

"Welcome to Jurassic Park - one of the fossils will be your tour guide," quips Trudy.

By Okanagan standards, the couple are indeed icons. They've been growing grapes for almost 40 years and have operated the winery for almost 30. But at age 70, they're more than ready to hand over the reins to their three children, Robert, Steven and George Jr., who has put in more than 25 years as the winemaker.

Stepping aside is, however, easier said than done. They have built up such a tremendously successful legacy that it takes all five Heisses

Photo: SHAWN TALBOT

The Heiss Family - George, Trudy, Robert, Stephen and George Jr. Heiss.

Photo: J.D. WEGNER

Signature flower baskets and barrels decorate the entrance to the Grapevine Restaurant.

to run it now - each with strengths and responsibilities. The departure of George and Trudy will leave a gaping hole. Thus, the Heisses have retained a family-succession professional who is guiding them through the process. It's not that George and Trudy don't take any time off. Having three capable adult children with strong work ethics has provided them with freedom to travel abroad and take frequent sailing trips along the coast. But they admit to an undeniable emotional attachment to Gray Monk.

"We live and breathe it, too," says Trudy. "It's our baby and it's hard to let go."

If you searched long and hard, you wouldn't find a pair of wine producers with a more unlikely background. Before getting into the wine business, they were in the business of beauty, having met at a hairstyling competition in Edmonton almost 50 years ago.

Ironically, they swapped careers looking for a more relaxed change of pace. The stunning pastoral setting along the shores of Okanagan Lake north of Kelowna certainly inspires peace and tranquility. But looks are deceiving.

"People say you're so lucky, it's so romantic. The romance lasts four or five days and then it's just damn, hard work," Trudy says with a chuckle.

> *"People say you're so lucky, it's so romantic. The romance lasts four or five days and then it's just damn, hard work"*
>
> ~ *Trudy Heiss*

As much as they kid about their years of toil in the industry, they share a deep and abiding pride in and passion for their work. And it's no wonder. BC wine country still struggles to prove its legitimacy today. Imagine what it was like for them then. Thirty years ago, there was no wine institute, no VQA, and no evidence that any of the classic grape varieties would grow here.

Nonetheless, they were inspired by Trudy's father, Hugo Peter, a self-taught grape grower in the Okanagan, to try their hand at the business. At the time, the valley's vineyards were filled almost exclusively with French hybrids. The Heisses first planted Marechal Foch, propagating cuttings from Trudy's father's vines. But George was never happy with that variety, once quipping that vines weren't imported from France, they were "deported."

He and Trudy began to consider planting vinifera grapes, taking their cue from Dr. Helmut Becker, a German viticulturalist who was spearheading a research project on classic varieties in the Okanagan. Eventually, they opted to plant Pinot Gris, Auxerrois and the French clone of Gewurztraminer. The grapes did surprisingly well from the start.

But there was some resistance to vinifera varieties by the grape growers' association. Hybrid growers were getting 12 tons an acre. For the vinifera varieties, they could expect only about five to six.

That wasn't the only area where the Heisses shook things up. Not content to accept the status quo, they began to seek approval for the establishment of cottage wineries in BC. That came in 1977, giving people like the Heisses the opportunity to produce wine as long they did so with their own vineyards. It was 1980 before all the details had been hammered out, but two years later, the doors of Gray Monk Estate Winery finally opened. The name was inspired by the fact Pinot Gris means "gray monk" in Austria, George's birthplace. That same year, son George Jr. went to Germany to train as a wine-maker at the Weinsberg Technical Institute. He returned and took over

the winemaking reins in 1984 and has never looked back.

Despite more than a quarter decade with the family business, hes has never considered going anywhere else and says he's always felt he's had the freedom to accomplish his own goals.

Brother Steven joined the business in 1994 and Robert returned to the fold six years ago - both working in marketing and administration.

None of them foresaw the potential, the growth and the tremendous success that resulted in an operation than now produces in excess of 60,000 cases of wine annually.

"We didn't have a clue. It just kind of evolved; we did what we had to do when the need arose," says Trudy.

Still their accomplishments have not gone unnoticed. In June, they were the recipients of an honorary fellowship in business from Okanagan College.

Yet, they are no better equipped today to predict the future for the local industry. "When people ask us what we think the wine business will be like 10 years from now, I ask them, 'are you bringing the crystal ball?" Trudy says with a smile.

For more information: www.graymonk.com.

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8TH GENERATION VINEYARD

In fact, the earliest valley wines were made in the mid 1800s, and the industry has only really been established in the last two to three decades.

But one winery family can boast of having roots so deep, they stretch back to the 1780s and encompass eight generations - granted, not solely on Okanagan soil.

Stefanie and Bernd Schales both come from German winemaking families. In fact, Bernd's legacy began in the Village of Dalsheim in the renowned Rheinhessen, the largest of the country's winemaking regions and the home of Liebfraumilch.

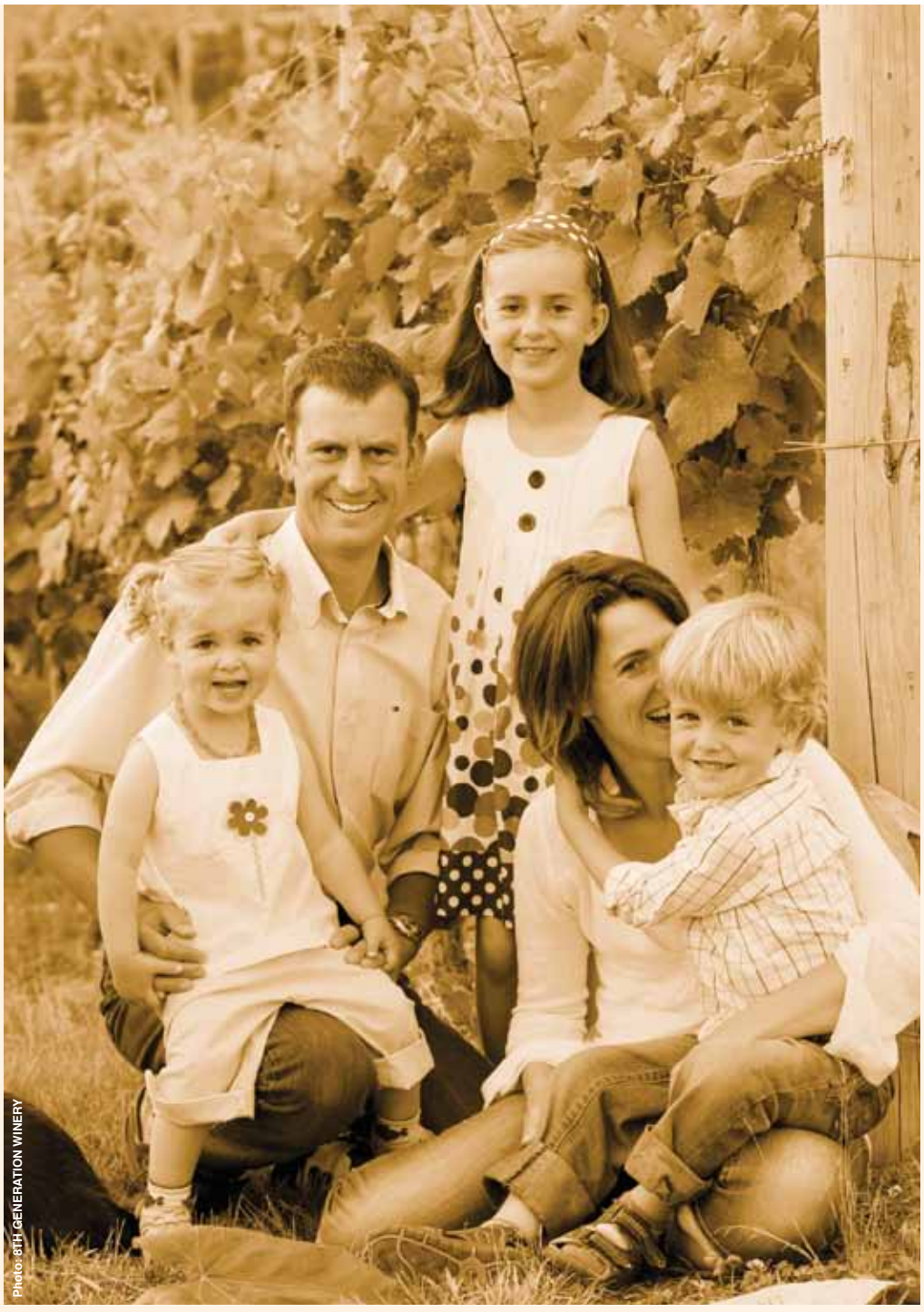
He hails from an agricultural family that raised crops and livestock, but also farmed grapes, used mostly to produce wine sold in tapped barrels to restaurants.

"It was also common to sell the barrels privately to people who wanted to have wine in their cellars," says Bernd. "But it wasn't usual to bottle the wine."

The family business was very small with just a few acres for several generations until Bernd's grandfather, Heinrich Schales I, came on the scene. He was classically trained in viticulture and oenology in Oppenheim and he opted to move the winery out of town in the early 1900s to expand it to about 15 acres.

"It was much more labour intensive in those days. They didn't have the machinery we do today. A lot of the work had to be done by horses. And they didn't have the wire trellisses — there was a single post at each vine," says Bernd.

Heinrich I had three sons, all who became involved in the business. He sent them all to school to study viticulture and they returned and ran their own departments. Bernd's father, Heinrich II, was in charge of the vineyard, one uncle took over winemaking and the other was in marketing and sales.



The Schales Family – Helena, Bernd, Johanna, Stefanie and Philip.

This led to substantial growth and by the late 1990s, the winery had expanded to 150 acres. And history was about to repeat itself.

"We, as the next generation, were following in the same footsteps," says Bernd. "My cousins and myself all started working at the winery."

While that sense of family connection and teamwork was good for a while, Bernd started to feel closed in.

"I felt too limited and wanted to do the whole procedure from working in the vineyard to

Photo: STEFANIE SCHALES

bottling and marketing and everything in between."

Bernd and Stefanie began looking for opportunities to do their own thing. They spent time in New Zealand and South Africa, but were drawn to Canada and set their sights on the Okanagan.

"The one reason why we looked at the new world - rather than Italy and Spain - was because there was more chance to get established as newcomers. Canada was ideal because it will always be small. And Canadians are proud of their products; they like the locally grown wines."

It took 15 months to arrange all the immigration paperwork, which, by all accounts, was pretty swift. The Schales impressed with their solid business plan, experience and education. In the meantime, they searched the valley for suitable property before being given the green light in 2003.

They settled on a vineyard in Okanagan Falls, growing and selling grapes to other wineries and hoped to build their own production facility onsite. But at the time, the construction industry was booming and it was next to impossible to secure contractors to do the work. So when the former Adora Winery property in Summerland

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came on the market, they leapt at the opportunity.

"It was perfect because it had a small house and large winery, whereas all the other properties we looked at had huge residences and maybe a small shed for winemaking. We didn't really want to move our home. So we pretty much decided to buy it (Adora) overnight."

The winery's name was aptly changed to 8th Generation. Although, with three young children of their own encompassing a ninth generation, Stefanie and Bernd may see fit to change it again.

Although they say they have had good success since relocating to the valley, the pair are no strangers to hard work. And with a 15-acre vineyard and 2,500 case annual production, all managed on their own, they have had plenty of insight into the challenges Bernd's grandfather faced almost a century ago.

Their first year, they both worked in their vineyard and Bernd took a second job working at another winery. Meanwhile, they toiled through the night renovating their home.

"It's not a year I would like to repeat," Stefanie says with a laugh.

Still, they'd made a pact when they moved to the Okanagan to re-evaluate their plans in a few years and decide if they should stay or go.

"It's been five years and we're still here," she says.

For more information: www.8thgenerationvineyard.com.

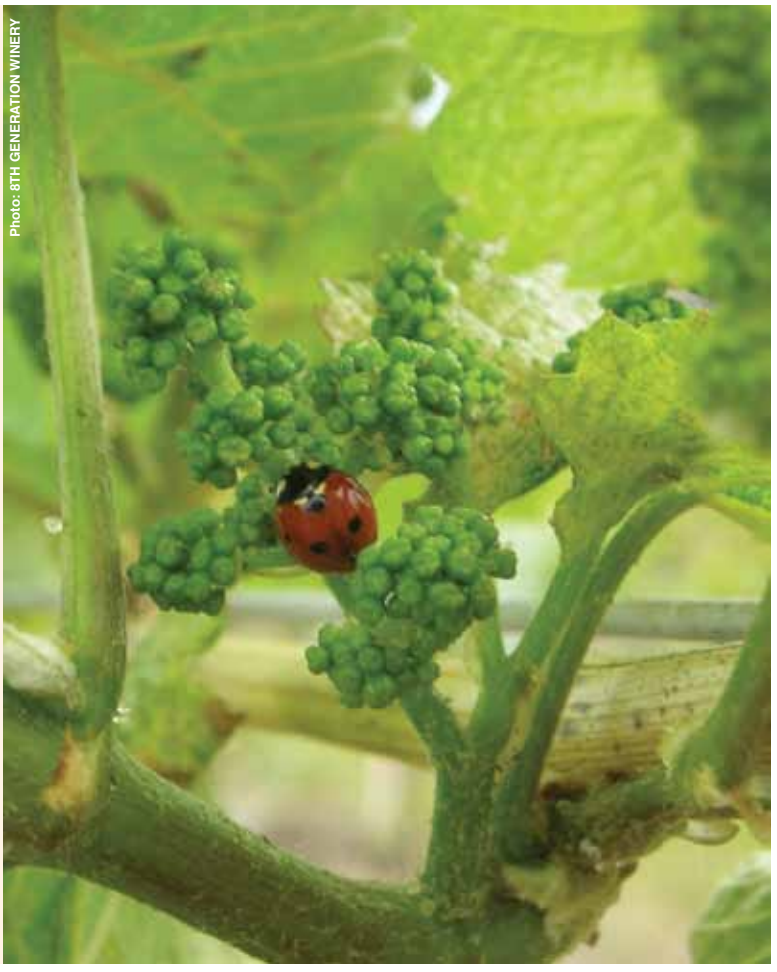

Photo: 8TH GENERATION WINERY

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vineyard getaways

Hester Creek VILLAS

By Lisa Harrison

Chef Roger Planiden hosts a cooking class.

Choose a spot with a view of a placid lake and mountains variously cobalt and gold in the afternoon sun and listen to a symphony of birds. Watch for golden eagles, bighorn sheep and yellow-bellied marmots while hiking and biking. Sample exquisite cuisine and slide into bed pleasantly tired from a day of languid exploration. Why rush? There is far too much to experience with more than 100 wineries along 220 kilometres of Okanagan Valley. Fortunately, visitors can extend their wine country encounter by staying at and near wineries where accommodations range from comfortable to luxurious.

The villa at Hester Creek in Oliver falls into the luxurious category. Located on the Golden Mile, Canada's most productive grape-growing region, the Tuscan Mediterranean style suites exude Italian charm. With just six suites, the atmosphere is as serene as the service is warm and personal. Lee Ann, the hospitality manager, opens the door to La Sirena executive suite, located at the northern end of the stucco building that contains the other, smaller suites. Rich fabrics, soothing earth tones and a high ceiling beckon us to enter. On the east side of the suite, French doors open onto a patio with an incredible view. Designed to accommodate the winery's

The open piazza at Hester Creek Villas.

owner on his frequent jaunts from Prince George, this is a home away from home.

At approximately 1,200 square feet, the suite has a kitchen/dining area with a full-sized oven, small refrigerator and table for four. Two overstuffed chairs with ottomans invite guests to settle in by the cultured-stone, gas fireplace. The main living room is cozy with valley views to one side and a large, high definition television with satellite channels for music and television on the other. Cool Italian porcelain tiles in warm sienna complement the muted golds, oranges and browns of the drapery and upholstery. A two-piece bathroom is beside the living room and the bedroom has an ensuite with a deep soaker tub, shower (with a relaxing rainfall setting) and plush robes. Free, high-speed, wireless Internet throughout the suite makes it easy to catch up on emails. A geothermal system extending under the hills to the west provides naturally cooled or heated air that is quietly vented into the suite. Unlike air conditioning that is typically used in hotels, geothermal air is refreshing without being too chilly. Because the villa is as far west from the north-south highway in the Oliver area as visitors can go, they hear the gentle sounds of nature and not much else.

... hear the gentle sounds of nature and not much else.

On this evening at Hester Creek, there is a special event: a cooking class by Chef Roger Planiden. In a state-of-the-art demonstration kitchen beside the tasting room in the main building, 14 people choose seats around the large, granite counter. In the centre, with easy access to a built-in refrigerator and induction stovetop, the chef is set to prepare three dishes paired with Hester Creek wines. First, is a Cauliflower Velouté with Seared Tiger Prawn and Gala Apple Slaw. With remarkable speed, he dices, sautés and whips the soup into an incredibly delicate, airy creation. Paired with the nectarine, melon and green apple fruits of the Pinot Blanc, the first dish evokes sighs of pleasure from the appreciative crowd. Before the last drop is consumed, Planiden begins the next dish, a Pan Roasted Duck served over Oyster Mushroom Risotto with White Truffle Essence and Balsamic Reduction. The duck breasts are partially prepared with some fat trimmed and, he explains, the remainder scored to release the juices.

This class is about socializing over a gourmet meal as well as education. While the students hail from Alberta, the Okanagan and the Lower Mainland, they all have one thing in common: a love of food. Planiden's culinary tools and techniques spark conversations around the table on everything from sea salt to graters to preparing risotto. On the topic of risotto, the chef shares atypical advice: "Don't over stir; it makes the rice gummy. Just turn it occasionally. "With that, he grabs the handle of the skillet and tosses the partially cooked grains into air, deftly flipping them as we gasp with surprise. Soon, the duck is perfectly cooked and he cuts generous slices, laying them over the

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Photo: L. HARRISON

Chef Roger Planiden shares his culinary expertise.

flavourful risotto. The mild, tender duck and earthy mushroom flavours meld amiably with the blackcurrant undertones of the Cabernet Merlot.

As guests savour the duck, Planiden brings out a pan of lamb 'lollipops' for Roasted Lamb Loin with Salpicon. With dangerous efficiency, Lee Ann, her husband, Robin, and their assistant replace plates and top up our wine glasses. It is now 8:30. The conversations between guests and the chef are animated. The students to my left discuss the merits of the last pairing while the young couple to my right discuss East Indian versus more subtle African spices with the expertise of restaurateurs (which they are). The blackberry and Cabernet Sauvignon sauce over the lamb roast is a hit, pairing seamlessly with the Cabernet Sauvignon selection. Classified as a reserve wine, there are only 300 cases of the excellent 2006 vintage.

Conversations linger well past the 9:00 pm finish. People are curious to know about the chef's professional experience, which includes working as an executive chef at the Great Estates Okanagan, Nk'Mip Cellars, Cellar Door Bistro and Fairmont. Planiden was raised in the Kootenays, but spent much of his career in the Okanagan, so he also has a lengthy relationship with local foods. Not merely embracing a popular environmental trend, Planiden speaks of eating locally much the same way winemakers speak of terroir. "Use what grows where you walk and in the air that you breathe," he says. Indeed, everyone here tonight learned the delicious benefits of consuming local food and wine.

Some students are also guests at the Hester Creek villa and have a five-minute walk to the suites on the single lane road that winds through the vineyard. Signposts indicate the grape varieties: Merlot, Pinot Blanc and Cabernet Franc. We have the unique experience of destination wineries — sleeping surrounded by grape vines.

In fact, there are 75 acres of vines in production on this 95-acre property. Among the numerous varieties grown here are those for their signature wines: Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Pinot Blanc and Trebbiano. Some of the Trebbiano vines are 40 years old and date back to the original owner, Joe Busnardo. This variety is fairly rare in BC and grows particularly well in the hot days and cool nights on these slopes on the Golden Mile.

The next morning, the weather is unseasonably cool, so breakfast is delivered to our room rather than being served on the villa's covered patio. It's tasty and healthy. The serving tray is laden with bowls containing mandarin slices, strawberries, grapes, and yogurt

The sunsets at Hester Creek Villas.

Photo: HESTER CREEK

topped with granola, as well as juice, coffee and freshly baked muffins still warm from the oven.

With one last stop at the 4,000 square foot guest centre to buy wine and to learn about upcoming musical events at Hester Creek's outdoor amphitheatre, it is time to leave. As we, reluctantly, head down the hill toward the wide valley, marmots poke their heads up on either side of the road as if to say goodbye. Nature is another memorable feature of this winery. www.hestercreek.com.

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Central Okanagan

Surrounded by more than 20 award-winning wineries, this region offers easy access to tasting rooms, wine-inspired restaurants and seasonal wine patios. There are numerous premiere resorts and accommodations throughout the Central Okanagan that offer daily guided wine tours via their concierge or front desk services.

South Okanagan

Burrowing Owl Estate Winery
www.burrowingowlwine.ca

Naramata Bench

Visitors continuing the tour north along the Naramata Bench experience a fascinating profusion of wineries. Twenty operations are clustered around a meandering road along the east side of Okanagan Lake. Naramata also offers many opportunities to relax and slumber surrounded by vineyards.

Black Widow Winery
www.blackwidowwinery.com

Therapy Vineyards
www.therapyvineyards.com

D'Angelo Estate Winery's Vineyard B&B
www.dangelowinery.com

Elephant Island Orchard Wines
www.elephantislandwine.com

North Okanagan

Toward the northern limit of the Okanagan's prime growing region, wine tourists will find some lovely terrain and one of the region's oldest wineries. Tourists travelling north on highway 97 into Lake Country, can take a jaunt to the west, up a winding road and over a wooded rise. As they come down the other side, on narrow Camp Road, Okanagan Lake comes into view along with three wineries: Gray Monk Estate Winery, Arrowleaf Cellars and Ex Nihilo.

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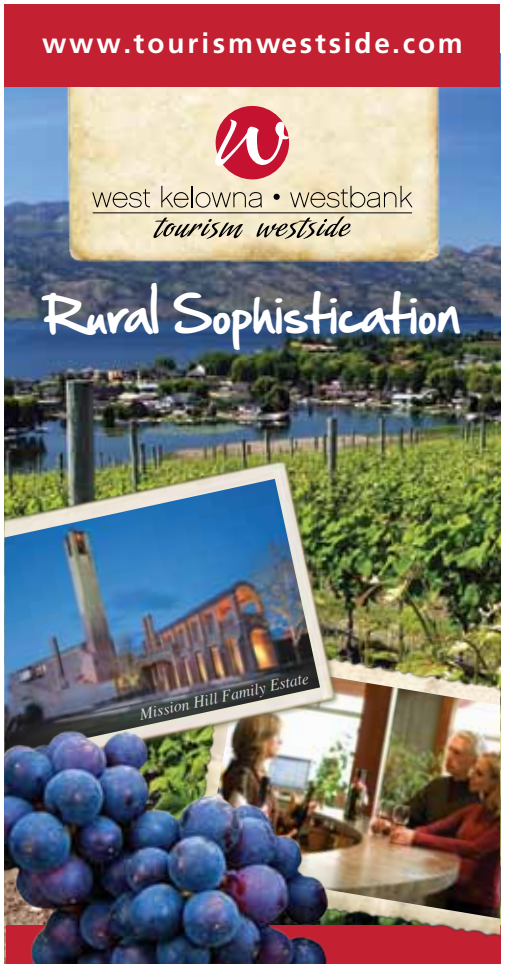

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2010: Oct 1 - Oct 10 2011: Sept 30 - 9 2012: Sept 28 - 7

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Valley WINE PRO is Newest Master of Wine

By Ingo Grady

And you thought college was tough…

Okanagan wine expert and Savour contributor Rhys Pender has just been confirmed by the Institute of Masters of Wine as the first new Master of Wine (MW) of 2010. He is the fourth and youngest MW based in Canada, joining the 281 Masters of Wine who reside in 23 different countries.

Notoriously difficult and outrageously expensive to earn, the MW title is the Ph.D of the wine world, comparable to finding the Holy Grail and winning the Triple Crown combined. As a matter of fact, there are nearly twice as many (540) astronauts as MWs.

Dr. Josef Schuller, MW, chairman of the Institute, said: "We are delighted to welcome Rhys as member of the global community of Masters of Wine. He has demonstrated exceptional knowledge and ability in the art, science and business of wine. We look forward to the contribution he will make to the world of wine and to the Institute in the years ahead."

"Achieving the MW feels like a massive relief, yet, at the same time, feels like it has opened a whole world of new adventures," says Rhys, who will be inducted at the Institute's annual awards ceremony in London in November.

According to Rhys, the program's storied difficulty is part of its allure. "The world of wine is infinitely fascinating and the mental challenge motivated me as much as the professional gain, realizing that there's still so much more to learn."

His refreshingly uncommon attitude suggests that Rhys is firmly on the practical vs. academic side of the MW equation. "It's cool to be done, but what's next?"

During the build-up for the finals, Rhys tasted 50-100 wines a week while holding down revolving roles as wine educator, writer, wine judge and consultant. The tasting portion allows candidates to demonstrate

Rhys Pender, Master of Wine.

not only that they are competent tasters, but that they have enough knowledge of world wine styles to make an educated determination of the origin. Candidates can mistakenly identify a wine, but earn points if they can persuasively support their conclusions.

But the exam measures far more than expertise of Rhys' palate. The public image of MWs is they are "super-tasters," who make statements like, "It's the 1963 Chateau Petrus; I'd recognize it anywhere." This obscures the fact that they are also deeply informed about viticulture, winery production, packaging, distribution, regulation, marketing and sales.

Working in the wine trade since age 14, Rhys' career has included experience in the vineyard, cellar, wine retail, education and hospitality - providing knowledge in all facets of the business. He is also a regular contributor to Wine Access, Savour Magazine, Scout Magazine, CityFood, Oil & Gas Magazine and Montecristo. His new site, rhyspender.com, features his wine reviews and perspectives on the wine world.

Rhys' natural state of being is in the vineyard.

Q&A with Rhys Pender

Q. *Rhys, what are the benefits of the MW title?*

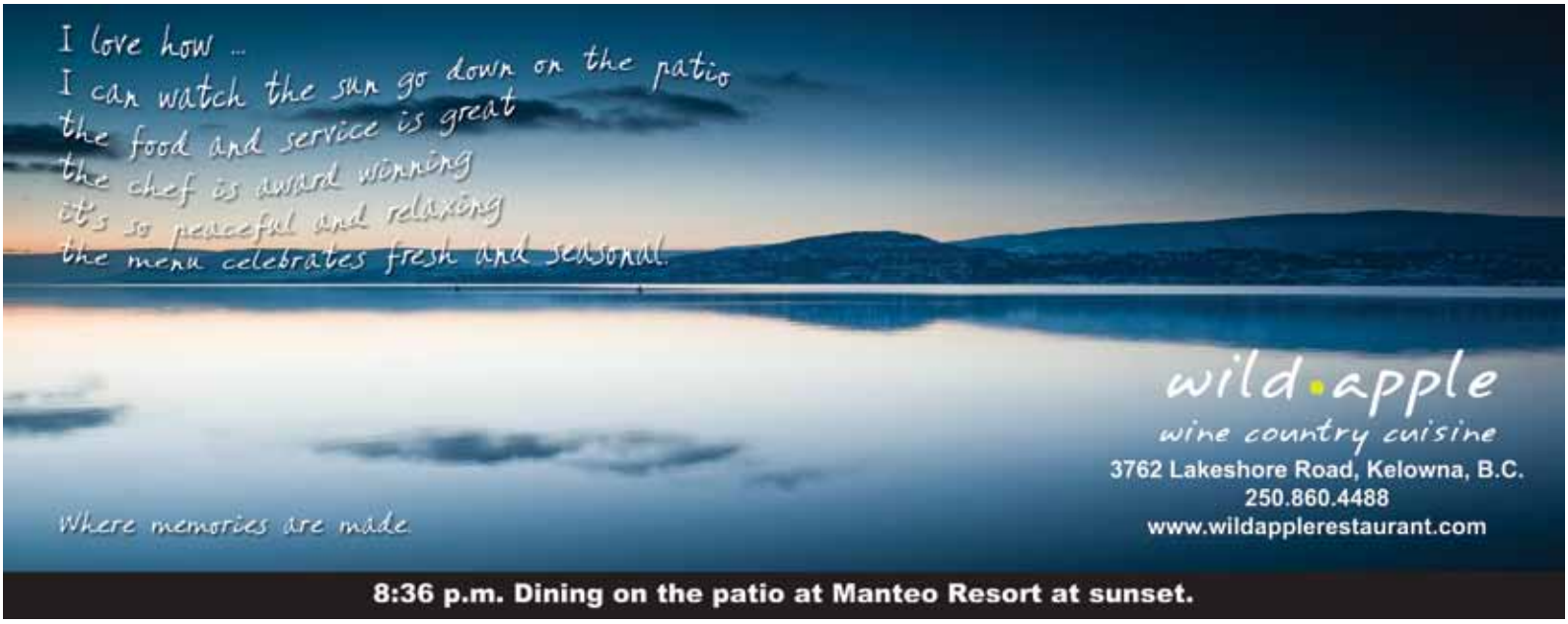
A. *The main benefits are the recognition that comes along with the letters and the wonderful MW community that opens up doors all around the world. And, of course, the great benefit that I can read about wine and taste wine without the added pressure of having to memorize it all for exams.*

Q. *The Institute is based in England, why?*

A. *The U.K. has always been an important centre of trade for the wine business. Not having their own industry, but having a big population, meant that a lot of trade developed in the U.K. The MW used to be trade only originally.*

Q. *Where can a person study to become a Master of Wine and what are the prerequisites for admission to the program?*

A. *The MW seminars and exams are offered in Europe, Australia and California. Students travel to one of these areas. Prerequisites are to complete the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) Diploma,which is a two+ year program. Then, they can apply for entry into the MW program.*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And you thought college was tough... Rhys' six-year journey to the MW

Rhys had worked several years in the wine industry and earned his diploma from the Wine & Spirit Education Trust, an educational body affiliated with the IMW.

2004 - attended his first seminar.

2007 - passed his first exam. Theory component: four papers on the Production and Handling of Wine, the Business of Wine, and Contemporary Issues.

2008 - successfully tackled the Practical component (three flights of 12 wines each, tasted blind).

2010 - completed the third and final stage, the Dissertation (10,000 word report based on original research) early this year.

Do you have MW potential?

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- *Which sectors of the wine industry offer the most profitable return to the long-term investor?*
- *A bad day tasting wine is better than a good day at work. Discuss.*
- *One of your clients has queried the authenticity of two parcels of wine: 1) a case of Chateau Latour 1995, and 2) a pallet of Rioja Reserva 1994. As a Master of Wine, what will you do to establish the truth?*

To become a Master of Wine, one has to pass everything. Last year, two-thirds of those who sat one or both parts of the two-part exam failed to pass even one part.

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Photo: RHYS PENDER

Kootenay cuisine

Nelson's CULINARY SCENE

By Andrew Findlay

One measure of a city's cultural evolution is the number of restaurants and watering holes per capita. On a sunny, spring, mid-week afternoon, I sit on the artfully designed outdoor garden patio at Oso Negro, which one Nelson local refers to as owner Jon Meyer's "cathedral of coffee love." The scene is one of delicious idleness, like a Paris street café except with dreadlocks. And judging by the steady drift of patrons through the doors of this establishment a few blocks uphill from Baker Street, the Nelson mosaic of hippies, young, urban refuges, artists and outdoor adventure addicts have one or two things figured out when it comes to appreciating the finer attributes of life.

Take a refined, slightly European joie de vivre appreciation around all things food and drink, combine it with a rustic British Columbian love of adventure and fresh-air living and you have Nelson. It's close to nowhere in particular, but, at the same time, close to everything you need. Situated on a forested hillside next to where the Kootenay River exits its namesake lake, this city of 10,000 needs no introduction as a place where people go to feast on powder snow in winter, rip legendary trails on their mountain bikes, and explore their creativity within a diverse arts scene more befitting a city four times its size. A

Photo: Whitewater Cooks/D.Gluns

Mountain view dining in the Kootenays.

Photo: Whitewater Cooks/D.Gluns

much better kept secret is the fact that Nelson is a bit of an undiscovered culinary backwater, an emerging epicurean's paradise of globally inspired cuisine that seems to embody what the Kootenays are all about – active, healthy living mixed with a sense of fun, perhaps even cheekiness.

For culinary cheekiness, Kootenay style, the first stop might as well be Brent Petkau, The Oysterman. With his bountiful salt-and-pepper beard, mischievously twinkling eyes and wave of thick hair barely contained by a Che Guevera-esque beret, Petkau might well be the embodiment of Nelson spirit wrapped in a bipedal package. As a tree planter, Petkau moved to Nelson more than 20 years ago before doing a 180-degree lifestyle turn and buying an oyster lease on Cortes Island, between Campbell River and the mainland. Over the years, he carved out a niche as an artisan oyster man selling the sex appeal and flavour of this mysteriously alluring bivalve to high-end restaurants from Calgary to Toronto. When the global economy spiralled downward in 2008, Petkau decided to simplify, so he answered the call of the Kootenays. Now, he drives a truckload of shellfish several times a month from Cortes Island to Nelson, where he lives once again with his family. He mostly sells directly to his shellfish enamoured local market, but occasionally does guest oyster-shucking appearances in Nelson eateries. His bivalves have also been a key ingredient at the annual Oysters, Authors and Ale festival that, in true eclectic Kootenay fashion, marries a love of literature with good beer and delectable oysters, while raising money for literacy programs. Ironically, it's in Nelson, a thousand kilometres from the nearest high-tide line, where Petkau has found his ultimate, oyster-appreciative audience.

There are some really exciting things happening in Nelson these days. This place is rapidly becoming the oyster eating capital of Canada.

"There are some really exciting things happening in Nelson these days. This place is rapidly becoming the oyster eating capital of Canada," Petkau says. "People here get it."

What exactly is "it?" I suppose the residents of Nelson embrace originality around cuisine with the gusto of a skier about to launch into a bowl of knee-deep, fresh powder, or a kayaker scoping a stretch of rapids on the Slocan River. That sort of food appreciation inevitably attracts restaurateurs. In 1995, Paul and Julia Archambault opened The All Seasons Café, wedged into a back-alley space off Baker Street, following, in their own words, "a hunch that this cultured and notorious little mountain town would welcome a neighbourhood bistro serving modern food with a savvy little wine list." Turns out they were right. Recent arrival BIBO brings a strong Mediterranean influence of charcuterie and artisan cheeses and a revolving by-the-glass wine menu. The Twisted Tomato, which expanded to Nelson from its original locations in Grand Forks and Trail, offers artisan pizzas to the Nelson masses, while over at Baba's Indian Cuisine every Monday night a little over $10 gives you access to a tasty buffet of papadams, rice, numerous vegetable dishes, chicken tandoori and chutneys. The Nelson Brewing Company keeps local taps primed with its certified organic brews, such as the Blackheart Oatmeal Stout and Nelson After Dark ale. There are even a couple of pioneering Kootenay wineries within striking distance of Nelson — Trail's Columbia Gardens Vineyard and Winery and Creston's Skimmerhorn Winery and Vineyard — extending British Columbia's winemaking tradition east of the Okanagan Valley into unconventional territory.

Shelley Adams, author of the popular cookbook Whitewater Cooks, knows what Petkau means about Nelsonites "getting it." Adams was a movie-set caterer in Vancouver before moving to Nelson in 1985 with her husband-to-be, Mike. In 1997, the couple bought Whitewater Resort and the chef, who studied for two years at L'Ecole de Cuisine La Varenne in Paris, became the creative director and manager of the resort's Fresh Tracks Café. This homespun diner makes the fare at most ski resort day lodges seem like hospital gruel in comparison. Nelson writer Mitchell Scott describes it as a place "where hearty, wholesome, ridiculously delicious food fuels

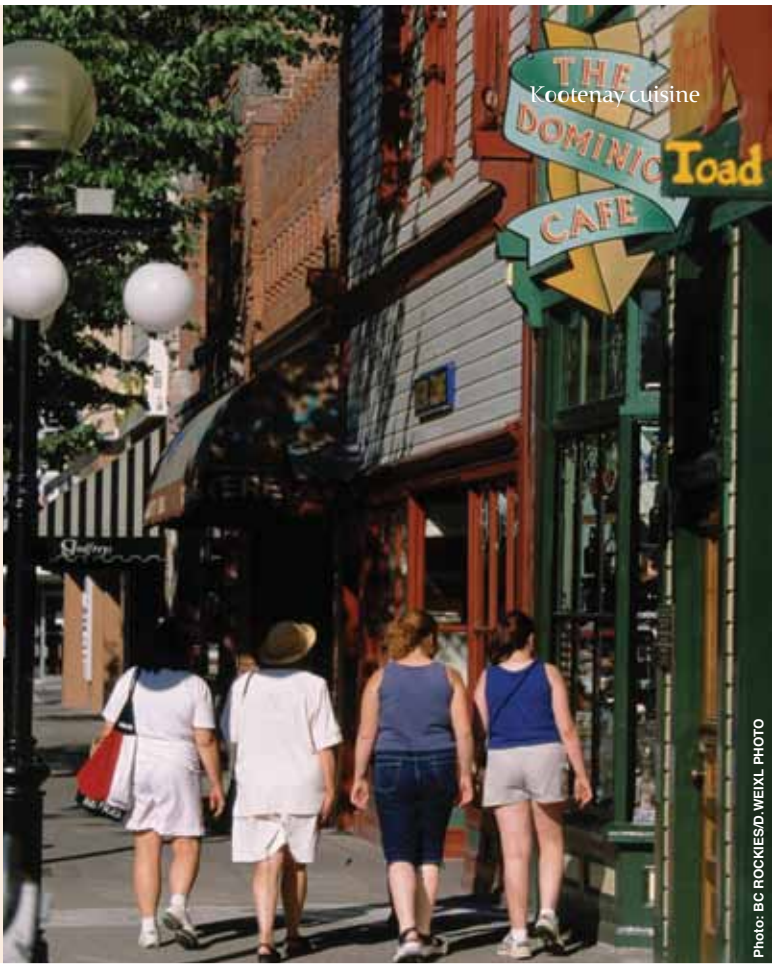
neverending adventure." In 2008, the couple sold Whitewater, but Adams' adventure with food was just beginning. The recipes developed in the Fresh Tracks kitchen that provided the fodder for Whitewater Cooks, which has sold 30,000 copies and counting, would also fill the pages of its successor, Whitewater Cooks At Home, rapidly approaching similar sales figures.

"Nelson is filled with active people who want to eat well, but not spend a lot of time in the kitchen," explains Adams, reflecting on the inspiration for her growing family of Kootenay-inspired cookbooks.

Whether it's Slocan Valley beef, Silver King tofu, handcrafted chocolate or Meadowbrook Farm produce and herbs, Adams made sure that the recipes included ingredients available in and around Nelson and wouldn't require the kind of epic hunting and gathering mission that quickly burns out the occasional home chef. Now, a third cookbook is about to hit the shelves of your kitchen.

"I'm working on my latest cookbook at a very leisurely pace. I don't think of it as a job; it's more like a hobby that has turned into a success," says Adams, who admits another restaurant is also not out of the question.

Edmonton chef and entrepreneur Brad Lazarenko felt the pull of



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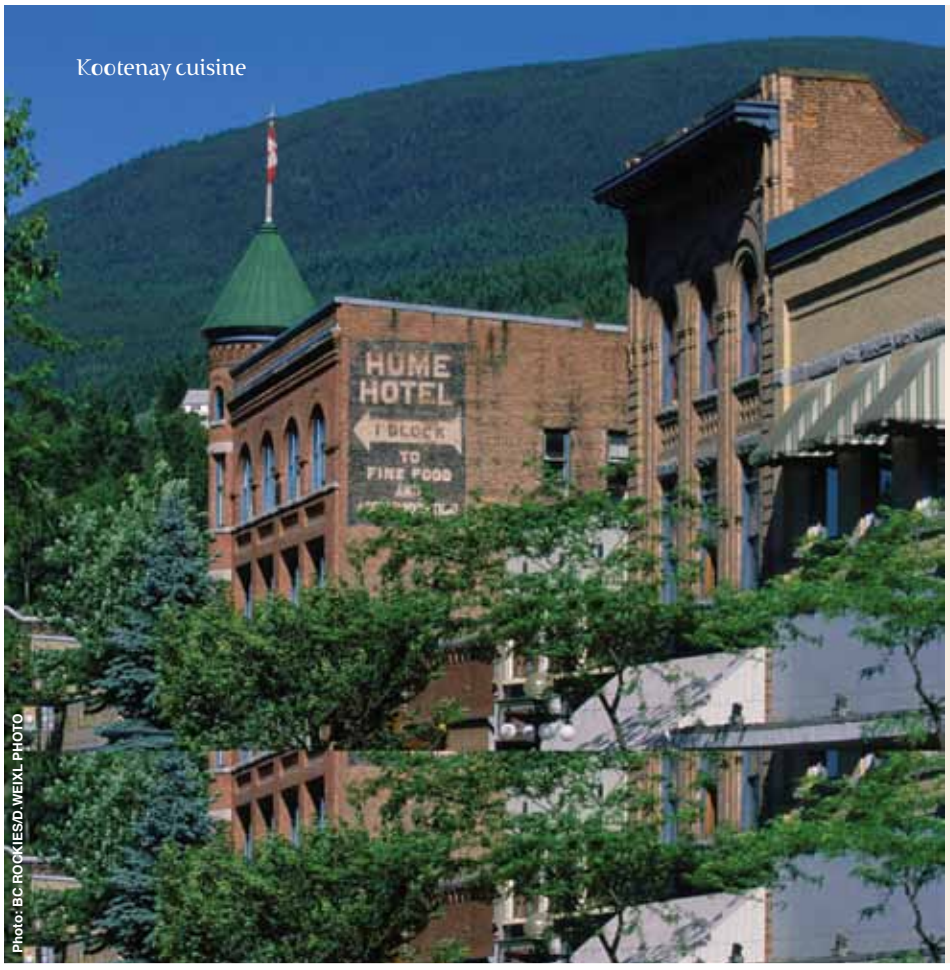

Photo: BC ROCKIES/D.WEIXL PHOTO

Kootenay cuisine

Nelson a few years ago after a friend mentioned a need for a wine bar. In December 2008 Lazarenko, who is one of four partners in the Culina Family of Restaurants, opened the 28-seat BIBO restaurant, modelling it after the successful Bar Jamon in New York City. As executive chef and owner, he oversees a personally designed menu that he refers to as "rustic European fare," rounded out by classic dishes such as minestrone soup and Swiss cheese fondue. Once a month, Lazarenko invites Petkau to shuck up a storm for BIBO patrons, bringing a deliriously decadent pairing of wine and raw oysters to the bar.

"Nelson is impressive. For a town of this size there are an incredible variety of restaurants," Lazarenko says. "I'm not exactly sure what it is about this place. I think a lot of people have moved here from bigger cities and there are also a lot of creative people around because of the colleges and art school."

Back at Oso Negro, Nelson's cathedral of coffee love, baby chariots form a traffic jam on the nearby sidewalk

as a trio of young mammas and papas steer their charges toward the outdoor booths. Nearby, a small consortium of pony-tailed and silver-haired elders is gathered around a table littered with newsletters, lattes and croissant crumbs, engaged in an earnest discussion about something or another. The atmosphere is convivial in that uniquely Nelson kind of way; the signs of a compact little city, far from everywhere, but close to everything, that has evolved into a place of enlightened good living, where people make time to kick back, discourse about the world and simply break bread with friends.

Photo: BC ROCKIES/D.WEIXL PHOTO

Photo: BC ROCKIES/D.WEIXL PHOTO

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Kootenay cuisine

KOOTENAY WINERIES

By Andrew Findlay

When **Marleen Hoag** and her husband, Al, proprietors of **Skimmerhorn Winery and Vineyards**, decided to get into the wine business, they felt like lonely pioneers. The Creston Valley, though renowned as a breadbasket of fruit and produce, hadn't exactly attracted the attention of winemakers. As orchardists, the Hoags' story was familiar. Markets for apples had been in steady freefall, and they were looking for a new direction. They pondered opening a cidery, but instead, in 2003, bought a prime 20-acre piece of sunny Creston Valley real estate and planted 14 acres of grapes.

"People have been growing soft fruits around here for years, so we knew it was possible," Marleen says. "We're at the same latitude as Northern Germany and France, so why not?"

The Hoags are keeping it local and small, with no desire to compete with Okanagan Valley winemakers. However, this young upstart, with New Zealand transplant Mark Rattray at the helm as head winemaker, is already making a mark in the world of wine. The 2008 Pinot Gris and 2008 Gewurztraminer won silver medals from Intervin, while the 2007 Marechal Foch and 2008 Ortega took home silver and gold from the 2009 Finger Lakes International Wine Competition in New York.

While Skimmerhorn has pioneered grape growing and winemaking in the Creston Valley, **Columbia Gardens Vineyard and Winery** claims the title of the first commercial winery in the Kootenays. In 1995, Lawrence Wallace planted an experimental plot of Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Noir, Marachel Foch and Auxerrois vines. In 2001, Wallace opened a tasting bar, and since then, Columbia Gardens' VQA wines have reaped numerous awards, most notably gold for their 2006 Gewurztraminer at the 2007 All Canadian Wine Championships.

KOOTENAY WINES tasting notes

By: Helene Scott

Columbia Gardens Station Road White 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Pale, straw colour. Shy nose with hints of apricots, peach, pear and melon. Also a melange of tropical fruits – passion fruit, papaya, guava. Dry crisp blend of Auxerrois, Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. Rose petals dominate on the palate. Light to medium body with a medium length to the aftertaste. Light summer sipper.

$12 3 out of 5

Columbia Gardens Gewurztraminer 2007

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Textbook example of aromatic Gewürztraminer nose. Perfumed and floral, intense rose petal, Turkish delight, spice, tropical fruit and pear drops on the nose. These same flavours come through on the palate. Layers and layers of flavours that linger and create a long aftertaste. Attractive, bright pale straw hue. Off-dry style may make this wine a bit sweet for those who enjoy a drier wine.

$15 3 out of 5

Skimmerhorn Pinot Gris 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Subdued tropical fruit on the nose with hints of green grass, apple and pear. Medium bodied, crisp acidity with some sweetness on the palate, but a well-balanced wine with good weight and texture. More flavour on the palate than you'd expect from this pale, lemon-coloured wine. Made in the Italian Pinot Grigio style.

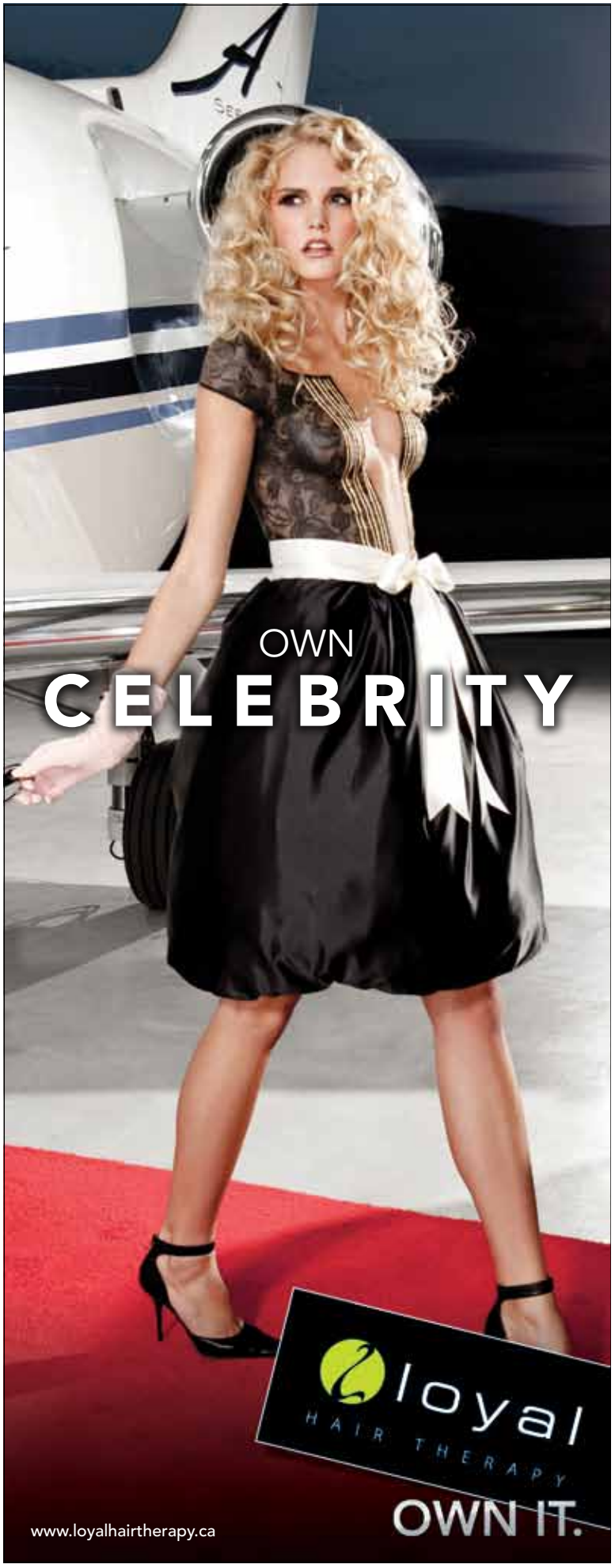
$15 3 out of 5

Skimmerhorn Ortega 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

I expected a more intense nose from this usually aromatic grape (a cross between Müller Thurgau and Siegerrebe). Muscat and peach aromas on nose and palate. Rich mouth-feel and medium body, off dry. Rather short aftertaste and not completely balanced. Muted golden colour with a watery edge. The wine won a gold medal at the recent Finger Lakes International Wine Competition.

$17 2.5 out of 5



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VQA Turns 20

By Scott Fraser

2010 marks the 20th anniversary of the Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) in British Columbia.

Scott Fraser, Chairman of the BC Wine Institute

The implementation of BC VQA wine standards was historic and forever changed the wine industry. In recognition of this important event, Mr. Fraser shares his thoughts from the early days to the present and the future of the VQA and the BCWI.

Why is it important for a BC winery to be a part of the BCWI?

Wineries that join the BCWI benefit directly from events and promotions that we host to show our members' wines to consumers, the trade and media. We also put on seminars to help them be more effective businesses, and they have access to our 20 BC VQA Wine Stores as a sales outlet. They also benefit from our work to create a better business climate for the wine industry, and we can only be effective if we have a strong membership base. In fact, we have nearly 100 winery members representing more than 95 percent of BC VQA wine production.

How has the VQA influenced the Okanagan's wine industry since its inception during the past 20 years?

Most countries that produce quality wines have had decades or centuries to build their industries and their reputations. In BC, we are well down that path in just 20 years. That was accomplished because of the hard work of early visionaries and the dedication of entrepreneurs who followed. VQA was, and remains, the framework that ties them together to promote their products. In 1981, there were 14 wineries in BC when Anthony von Mandl, proprietor of Mission Hill Family Estate Winery, shared his vision for a vibrant wine industry that would evolve into a wine destination. We have done pretty well delivering on his vision.

In your opinion, what is the catalyst for industry growth in the Okanagan Valley?

Of course, it all begins with consumers loving the wines we produce. We also have three things going for us. First, we have an increasingly sophisticated wine culture in BC and North America — consumers want to know about what they are drinking, and to visit wine country, talk with the people who make the wine and discover new things. Second, the Okanagan is an exceptionally beautiful setting, even when compared to other great winemaking regions, so people want to visit us. Last, but most important, as an industry we finally have reached a critical mass so that accommodation and culinary choices are blossoming to serve wine tourists.

How important is the role of educating consumers about the quality of our local wines?

The steady growth in BC VQA Wine sales has been driven, in large part, by a strong local following. Tastings in Vancouver and Victoria, support from restaurants that host winemakers dinners, and the myriad of activities during the Okanagan Festivals have all, cumulatively, brought our wines to consumers. Today, BC VQA Wines outsell every import country in BC, an outstanding achievement, given that we are young industry competing against countries with centuries of experience.

How has the role of the VQA evolved?

Today, the BC VQA standard is overseen and enforced by an independent body, the BC Wine Authority, and the standard has evolved to better reflect the realities of winemaking in BC However, the essence of the standard — a 100 per cent BC wine that has passed a tasting panel — remains at its heart.

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VQA Grows Good Wine

By Lisa Harrison

When European settlers arrived in Canada in the 1800s and tried to grow the wine grape varieties from their homelands, the Vitis vinifera plants often succumbed to disease and cold winters.

In some regions of the country, hardy native species (e.g., *V. Labrusca*) produced peculiar, but drinkable wines. Eventually, the introduction of American hybrids and crosses such as Niagara, Duchess and Catawba improved the quality of wines, but it still fell short of European standards. Not much would change for several decades as Prohibition, government regulations and virtual monopolies left Canadian wine quality in limbo.

In the mid-1970s, Harry McWatters, founder of Sumac Ridge Estate Winery in BC's Okanagan Valley, and the founders of Inniskillin Wines in Ontario shook up the industry. They obtained licences to produce and sell wine and, by doing so, they created opportunities for others. Around the same time, experiments with techniques to grow tender *V. vinifera* varieties such as Chardonnay and Riesling were proving successful. Many farmers and orchardists converted to grape production. Unfortunately, the venture would be short-lived for many.

The signing of the Canada/USA Free Trade Agreement in 1988, together with a ruling under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade meant that Canada had to abandon tariff protection for the wine industry. Some growers accepted government compensation to rip out their vines following the 1988 harvest while others decided to persevere. As vast quantities of relatively inexpensive products flooded in, the remaining, dogged Canadian winemakers chose to differentiate their product.

With some support from the federal and provincial governments, many replanted with the classic grape varieties such as Chardonnay, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon. To

Photo: BC WINE INSTITUTE (winebc.com)

Working on the harvest.

assure consumers of quality, industry leaders in Ontario established the Vintners Quality Alliance in 1988. The BC VQA system was established in 1990. All wines bearing the designation VQA meet strict standards.

The primary set of standards relates to the quality of the grapes. The juice at harvest must contain a certain minimum natural sugar content; there are limits on the levels of chaptalization (the practice of adding sugar during fermentation); winemakers are prohibited from adding water at any stage in production, and the addition of sweet reserve wine is controlled. To meet these standards, great care is required in the vineyard. (Perfect weather doesn't hurt either.)

The VQA program also ensures that labels accurately represent the province, region, vineyard and estate of origin so consumers can be assured of quality. This is an important distinction. In British Columbia, truckloads of bulk wine are imported from California, bottled, then labelled rather vaguely as "cellared in BC" These wines cannot be labelled as VQA.

Ontario and British Columbia are the only two provinces producing wines that meet VQA standards; however, pockets of production exist in more easterly microclimates. In Quebec, there are more than 30 small wineries tucked into the warmest regions near lakes and in protected valleys growing mainly non-*vinifera* grapes. In Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley, there are approximately 325 acres in French hybrids with a small amount of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

VQA wines have generated enthusiasm for domestic wines, contributed to a flourishing tourism industry and earned a place for Canadian wines on the world stage.

For more information: www.winebc.com

Okanagan Falls vineyard.

Photo: BC WINE INSTITUTE (winebc.com)

THE Organic Revolution

By Rhys Pender

Never has the word sustainability been used so frequently in our day-to-day talk. Consumers are increasingly aware of what they eat and drink and where these foods and wines come from. Wine is not immune to the trends and, as a result, a growing number of consumers are interested in how their wine has been made, and they want to know the story from farm to glass. This has spurred an organic revolution.

The word organic can be a little misleading. To some people, organic means almost nothing, a word tossed out there, but with little substance behind it. For others, it represents an ideal that justifies a purchase decision, giving confidence that their money is helping to do some good in the world. So, it is not surprising that the word organic has become powerful. Sales of organic food in Canada have reportedly increased 20% annually for the past seven years and is now a $2-billion industry.

In spite of its recent growth, organic growing is nothing new. It is quite the opposite, a return to the original way of doing things. Post World War II, there were a lot of chemicals about and farmers found them a quick and easy way to produce large yields of crops. No one thought about health side effects or long-term effects on the soil and it seemed these wonder chemicals were another dream

Photo: KALALA ORGANIC ESTATE

Karnail Singh Sidhu, Kalala Organic Estate Winery.

Photos: COVERT FARMS

Gene Covert releases ladybugs into the vineyard.

invention making life that much easier. No weeds, no bugs, no diseases. It was too easy. But as the negative consequences of a reliance on chemicals started to be identified, a new understanding of biodiversity emerged. Organic growing works to establish a natural balance, and to preserve and enhance plant and soil health. A balanced vineyard, it turns out, can deal with many of the same issues, but naturally. The technique is called Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

A lot of the focus on organic farming is around weed control without herbicides, which can be a laborious task. This is particularly important for young vines, so they can get established without excessive competition from weeds. Once established, a number of the organic growers do not mind the look of some weeds in the rows. At Kalala winery, in the process of becoming fully certified, Karnail Singh Sidhu is not worried about weeds in older vineyards. "I like to use as a cover crop what naturally grows on the site and then occasionally roto-till it back into the soil for green manure,' says Karnail. Organic vineyards regularly rely on some natural plant species (read weeds) to attract predator insects that help control other pests. It is not uncommon to see tall cover crops left in the vineyard alleyways to provide habitat for a diverse range of predator species. The prettiest vineyard isn't necessarily going to produce the best grapes.

More and more vineyards seem to be making the transition to organic techniques, even though a number of growers are pursuing the methods without seeking certification. One is Tantalus Vineyards in Kelowna. With the goal of sustainability, the newly built Tantalus winery is seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification and also working with neighbour Arlo's Honey Farm to place bee hives in the vineyards to encourage biodiversity. Tantalus is also following organic techniques, not for marketing reasons, but for the health of the soil and the people working in the vineyard. "I just don't want to be using a bunch of chemicals," says Vineyard Manager Warwick Shaw.

Gene Covert, of Covert Farms and Dunham & Froese Winery in Oliver, has made the change to certified organic growing. Covert started the transition to organic certification for the 142-acre farm in 2005 and now has all 30 acres of vineyard certified. He is even dabbling in biodynamics, a method of farming that takes things a step further by conducting specific vineyard operations based on phases of the moon. In the winery, he is also trying to stick within organic techniques

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with the view to become certified in the cellar.

Summerhill Pyramid Winery farms organically and has certified organic status in the cellar for many of its wines. Winemaker Eric von Krosigk says "a big part of farming organically is avoiding monoculture." Summerhill leaves 20 acres of its property to natural habitat to encourage biodiversity and relies on natural predators to control pests such as leafhoppers. Being certified organic in the cellar creates some interesting challenges. "Things take longer," says von Krosigk. "Cleaning a tank without caustic soda or other chemicals requires a lot more hard work – lots of time with the scrub brush, but at the end, you know there is no chemical residue."

The only other winery to achieve organic certification in the cellar is Rollingdale. Rollingdale's philosophy also focuses on IPM and low yields of clean, fully flavoured grapes. In the cellar, it's taking a fairly natural approach, using inoculated yeasts and sulphur, but little else. The belief is that the less done to the wine, the more flavour remains.

Rollingdale is also exploring biodynamics, something we will be hearing a lot more of in the near future.

While growing and making wine organically can be a little extra hard work, those doing it really believe in it and are not afraid of doing whatever it takes. This overriding belief, not born by a marketing committee in a boardroom, but by a respect for the plant and the soil, is resonating with consumers who have similar values. Whether certified organic or simply practising sustainability, these healthy growing and winemaking techniques look set to continue this organic revolution.

Summerhill Pyramid Winery's winemaker Eric von Krosigk.

WHAT EXACTLY IS ORGANIC GRAPE GROWING AND WINE MAKING?

To become truly organic, one must receive certification from an official body. This involves following a strict set of rules and regulations and regular inspections. The process can take up to three years of transitional status before full organic certification is achieved. Basically, growing organically means that no synthetic herbicides, pesticides or fungicides are used. It does not mean that there is no spraying, only that what is sprayed is an organic or naturally produced product. Organic wine making takes things a step further. For a wine to be organically made, more requirements need to be met in the cellar. The wines are more natural, with less additives and lower sulphur levels.

For more information:

Kalala – www.kalalawines.ca

Summerhill - www.summerhill.bc.ca

Tantalus – www.tantalus.ca

Dunham & Froese – www.dunhamfroese.ca

Rollingdale – www.rollingdale.ca

Canadian Organic Growers - http://www.cog.ca

COABC - http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/

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tasting notes

Organic WINES

By Rhys Pender

Summerhill Organic Pinot Noir 2006

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

A lighter, delicate styled Pinot Noir with a combination of strawberry, raspberry and vegetal, earth and rhubarb aromas. The palate is dry with crisp acid and more red fruits with a little spice, clove and orange zest finishing with a medium length.

$25 3.0 out of 5

Summerhill Cipes Ice N/V

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

A medium salmon colour and ripe rich aromas of strawberry, raspberry, cherry and toasty lees with some complex savoury elements of clove, orange and flowers. The palate is off-dry, but balanced with crisp acidity. A creamy texture and mousse leads on to flavours of strawberry, cherry and peach with savoury lees and pepper notes. Made that much more special with a dosage of icewine rather than the standard cane sugar.

$45 4.0 out of 5

Dunham & Froese Estate Winery Amicitia Red Blend 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

A blend of six different varieties, this young wine is deep purple in colour with fruit forward aromas of ripe plum combined with oak, chocolate, violet, blueberry, dried herbs and salami. The palate is dry and with good flavour intensity with cassis, plum, chocolate, pepper and some savoury leather and tobacco notes. Tannins a little over the top.

$28 3.5 out of 5

Dunham & Froese Estate Winery Amicitia White Blend 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Another example of the increasingly popular white blends. This wine comprises Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Viognier has an interesting and eclectic mix of aromas – apple, pear, peach, citrus, tropical fruit, floral and chalk. The palate is quite full with a viscous buttery texture, balancing medium-plus acidity and flavours of banana, oak, spice, pineapple, peach and melon with some crisp green mineral notes lingering on a long finish.

$25 3.5 out of 5

Kalala Gewurztraminer 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Very pungent and classic Gewurztraminer aromas of lychee, melon, tropical fruit and spice notes reminiscent of a Chinatown spice market. The palate is off-dry, medium in body with apricot, more spice, peach skin and a touch of pithy astringency. The finish is medium length.

$18 3.0 out of 5

Kalala Pinot Gris 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

A very intensely aromatic example of Pinot Gris with floral aromas, sweet cantaloupe melon, tropical fruit, spice and grapefruit pith. The palate is just off-dry and quite full bodied with more melon, pear, paw paw, stone fruit and mineral notes. The acidity is nicely balanced and the finish lingers long. An interesting wine that shows the more aromatic side of the Pinot Gris variety.

$18 3.5 out of 5

Tantalus Riesling 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Pale lemon in colour with good intensity aromas of apple, lemon, peach and minerality. The palate has just a hint of sweetness, but is balanced with crisp, racy acidity, a medium body and flavours of ripe peach, apple and grapefruit. Very intense, very long and very racy making for a delicious wine for now or to age for 10 or more years.

$23 4.5 out of 5

Tantalus Pinot Noir 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

The Pinot Noir program at Tantalus is developing at a rapid pace, particularly as new clones start to come into production. The 2008 has fantastic aromas of cherry, clove, raspberry and strawberry with perfumed floral notes and a touch of orange zest. The palate has good texture with chocolate, strawberry, undergrowth, spice and sweet vegetal notes, balanced with quite soft tannins and lingering long on the finish. Barrel samples of the 2009 ensure this wine will be getting more attention in the future.

$30 4.0 out of 5

Rollingdale Luminescence Chardonnay 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

A rich and lush Chardonnay with aromas of ripe melon, peach, nectarine and toasty caramel oak. The palate has just a hint of sweetness, which adds to the full texture. The dominant flavours of buttered popcorn, spice, lees, pineapple, nut and more stone fruit are quite complex and only ruined by the 14.7% alcohol that dominates the finish.

$30 3.5 out of 5

Rollingdale Iversen Vineyard Pinot Noir 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

This organically grown and made Pinot Noir from the Iversen Vineyard in Oliver combines some old world forest floor and spice flavours and aromas with new world chocolate, oak, cherry and red fruit. There is refreshing acidity and red fruit flavours on the palate and medium body and tannins. The finish is medium length with some orange zest, nut and more spice.

$30 3.0 out of 5

tasting notes

Summer Sippers

Rosé is experiencing an international renaissance and its resurgence is also being noticed throughout the Okanagan.

By Helene Scott

It was the wine style of focus at the recent Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival. This fun and versatile wine can be enjoyed with a variety of foods and its pretty, pink, summer complexion will brighten the patio or dinner table. Many are now made in a much drier style than what we have come to expect. They now show an elegance and finesse that makes them worthy of a second try.

With warmer weather and longer days, good friends and family gather in the garden, on the patio and around the barbecue. I have selected wines that retail for $20 or less and hope you will be tickled pink by some of these super value, unpretentious summer sippers.

Greata Ranch Rose 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

The extended skin contact of the Pinot Noir grapes gives it a very dark colour and adds tannin to the backbone, providing a good texture. Strawberry flavour dominates the nose and palate. Crisp and dry, but to my palate, it's a bit short on the finish.

$14 2.5 out of 5

Meyer Family Gamay Rose 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Raspberry, cotton candy and strawberry are reflected in the deep cherry, pink colour and dominate on the nose and palate, with added hints of rose petals and apple. Crisp and dry, a good balance between sugar and acid, with a medium body and long finish. The freshness gives it good structure.

$20 3.0 out of 5

Gehringer Brothers Dry Rock Sauvignon Blanc 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Subdued tropical fruit notes, freshly cut green grass, bell pepper, gooseberries and a soft minerality. with a vivid straw colour that casts a lime green edge. Medium intensity on the palate with a medium-length, dry finish.

$16 3.0 out of 5

Poplar Grove Monster Vineyards Rose 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Blend of Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Syrah grapes. The juice was saigneed (bled) off before too much skin contact occurred. Intensely fruity nose with strawberry, guava, mint and citrus flavours resulting in a vibrant salmon pink presentation. The wine has bright, crisp berry flavours with spice on the palate. Well balanced with richness, finesse and a long aftertaste. A definite crowd pleaser.

$18 4.0 out of 5

Quail's Gate Rose 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

This soft, bright, pink beauty radiates elegant layers of red fruits – currents and strawberries and rhubarb, vibrant, crisp acidity, very well balanced on the palate with a hint of fruity sweetness and a lingering aftertaste. Rich fruit-forward flavour with a very fresh finish. The acidity brings a good balance to this wine.

$15 3.5 out of 5

Stag's Hollow Syrah Rose 2009

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Light salmon colour. Made from Syrah with some Viognier and a little Muscat added to enhance the flavours. Wild strawberries, maraschino cherries, floral and citrus notes on the nose. Rich, elegant mouth feel and a long aftertaste, a hint of sweetness is carefully balanced by the acidity. An award-winning (wine well worth trying.)

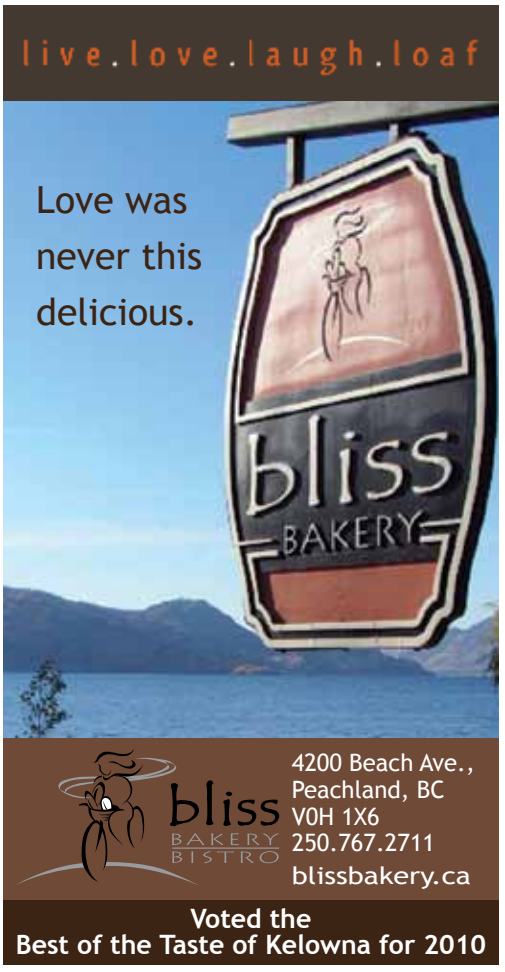
$18 4.0 out of 5

Calona Vineyards Artist Series Pinot Noir 2008

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Cherry, raspberry and rhubarb on the nose, soft spicy notes with a touch of earth ending in an uncharacteristic pale cherry complexion for this varietal. Very soft silky tannins,gentle oak and red fruits on the palate. Light-to-medium body with a soft, velvety finish and a slight hint of sweetness. Perhaps a touch on the light side for lovers of full-bodied red wines, but an easy wine to enjoy and great value. Serve slightly chilled on a hot summer's day.

$15 3.5 out of 5



Grapevine Restaurant
at GRAY MONK ESTATE WINERY

Over the years, the restaurant has grown in size and popularity and prides itself on its creative, fresh cuisine.

By Chef Steve Marston

Photo: SHAWN TALBOT

Established in 1972 by George and Trudy Heiss, Gray Monk is one of the oldest of the original Estate Wineries in British Columbia. Situated on one of the most beautiful slopes overlooking Okanagan Lake in Lake Country, the premises feature panoramic views that split between Kelowna to the south and Vernon in the north.

While the winery is its fourth decade of operations, the history of the Grapevine Restaurant only reaches back nine years when Willi Franz, with his chef partner, Rene Haudenschild, opened a small eatery to enhance the visitor experience. Over the years, the restaurant has grown in size and popularity and prides itself on its creative, fresh cuisine. Chef Willi's philosophy is simple: exceed his guests' expectations while supporting local farmers and producers.

And every year, Chef Willi aims his culinary sights even higher. This year, there is not only a complete menu makeover, but also some new talent in the kitchen. Sous chef Jeff Kreklau joins Chef Willi to assist in the preparation, creation, and delivery of the hundreds of meals served on a daily basis during their busy summer season.

Thankfully, for those who were challenged by the stairs leading to the restaurant, there is a newly installed elevator near the wineshop that descends from the upper level parking lot into the courtyard below, steps away from the entrance. Once inside, patrons are offered a choice of eating indoors or under

Duck Two Ways, a perfectly seared and pan-roasted duck breast carved onto the plate.

the protected covering of the outside patio. Each setting offers superb waterfront and vineyard views.

Owner Marie Franz leads the knowledgeable serving staff who take great care to guide you through a tempting selection of menu items as well as provide a tantalizing description of the daily specials. Allyson, my server, was charmingly enthusiastic about my menu choices. She suggested that I might sample a flight of wine to accompany my dinner. This is a simple and inexpensive way to taste three of the house wines. Tonight's flight includes: Estate Pinot Auxerrois, Estate Ehrenfelser and Estate Pinot Noir.

Warm, freshly baked, artisan bread arrives at my table with a choice of three butters, a roasted red pepper, herb garlic, and unsalted. In addition, I am presented with a small amuse bouche while I await my appetizers. Chef Willi encourages his team to come up with creative treats every evening.

Tonight, my little taster is a wonderful treat: a trio of shrimp, scallop and crab claw set in individual mini spoons. Incredible detail had been put into these little morsels: the spot prawn roe on the seared scallop is a highlight for me. Tasty and visually appealing, the amuse bouche

Photo: SHAWN TALBOT

Chef Willi Franz in his kitchen.

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Photo: J.D. WEGNER

Welcome to the Grapevine Restaurant.

Tasty and visually appealing, the amuse bouche outperformed its function as a great beginning to a thoughtfully prepared meal.

outperformed its function as a great beginning to a thoughtfully prepared meal.

My appetizers arrive soon after. The Gravlax Carpaccio is cured in-house and arrives with arugula salad, a horseradish aioli and chilli corn bread toast. You can really taste the freshness of the salmon balanced wonderfully with the accompaniments. The Almond-crusted Okanagan Goat Cheese is gently warmed through sitting on an apple ring and sided with mesculin greens with a citrus dressing.

The Auxerrois pairs well with the gravlax, crisp and peachy, and the Ehrenfelser, with hints of citrus, is a lovely match with the goat's cheese.

For my main course I choose the Duck Two Ways, a perfectly seared and pan-roasted duck breast carved onto the plate. Cooked to a delightful medium pink, the tender meat is sided with a playful presentation of duck confit combined with sautéed apple, then encased in a filo pastry package. To finish the plate, there is braised red cabbage and buttered spatzli and a merlot reduction. This dish is just ducky. It is an engaging blend of flavours that brings an appreciative pause with every mouthful.

The Estate Pinot Noir, as suggested on the menu, is a wise choice to pair with duck as it boldly delivers its typical nuances without overwhelming the flavours of the dish.

Saving just enough space for dessert, I decide to complete my meal with a baked white chocolate cheesecake offset with a fruit coulis and fresh strawberries.

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Photo: BRIAN SPROUT

After almost a decade of busy, summer seasons, Chef Willi still manages to balance all the key elements for a wonderful dining experience — wonderful surroundings, a relaxed atmosphere, exemplary service and delicious menu items that not only enhance the award-winning wines of Gray Monk Estate Winery, but highlight the bounty of our Okanagan Valley.

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www.grapevinerestaurant.ca RATINGS 4.5 / $$$

RESTAURANT REVIEW LEGEND

Rated on: Quality, Ambiance, Service, and Presentation. Chef's Rating 1–5

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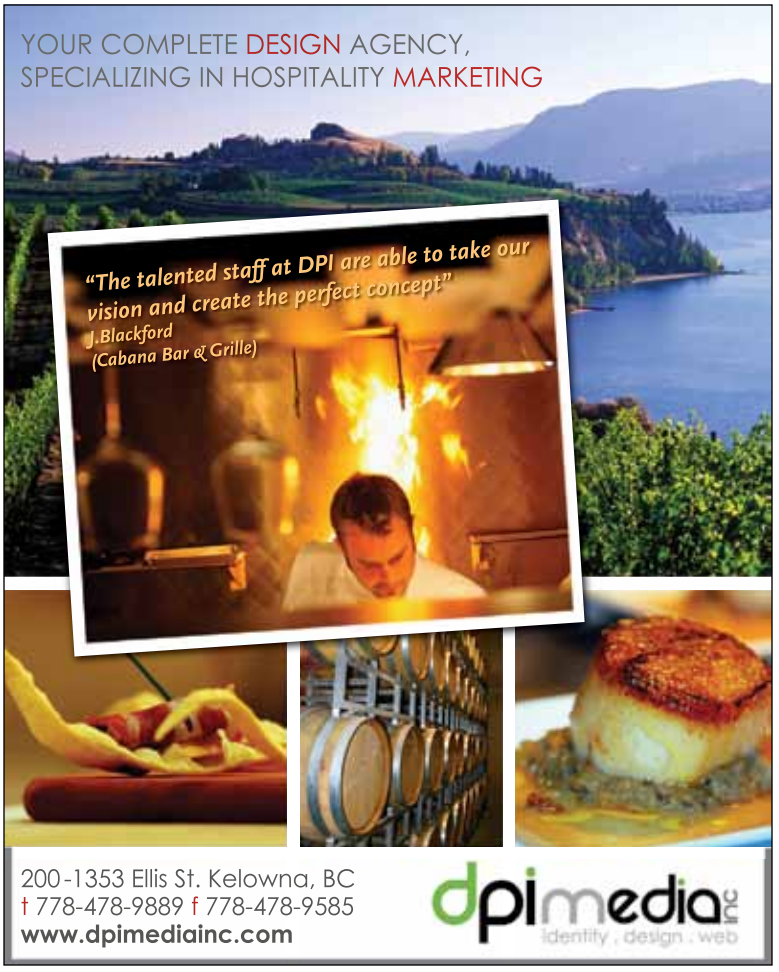
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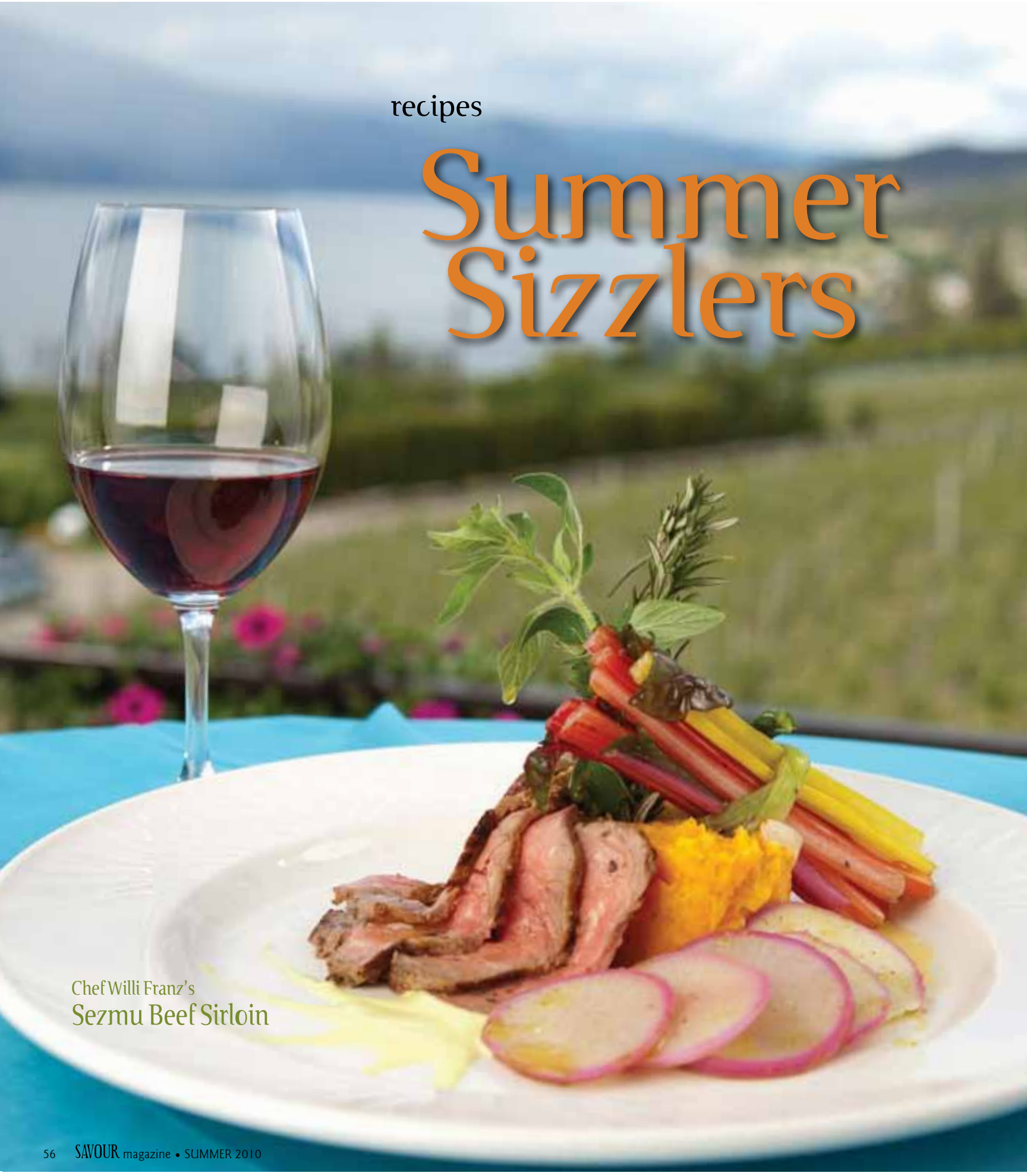

Chef Willi Franz's
Sezmu Beef Sirloin

Photo: SHAWN TALBOT

Rosemary Thyme Rubbed Sezmu Beef Sirloin

with sweet potato & carrot mash & Lake Country Culinary Garden Purple Turnip and Rainbow Chard Salad

By Chef Willi Franz

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS:

1 tbsp dijon mustard
1 tbsp finely chopped rosemary & thyme
1 tsp course ground pepper
480g beef strip loin

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Wine Pairing/Recommendation

Gray Monk Estate Gamay Noir

Gamay Noir is a traditional grape of the Beaujolais region of France and is also known as Gamay Beaujolais.

Gray Monk's Gamay Noir is a medium bodied wine of deep ruby colour with a floral-spice nose.

Releasing flavours of black cherry, raspberry, pepper and spice, this wine is a great choice with beef, wild game venison and wild rabbit.

METHOD:

Rub beef with the rosemary, thyme mixture and wrap in Saran wrap.
Place in a Cooler for 2 hours. Remove wrap
Cook on the BBQ for approx 15 to 20 minutes, Temperature should be 115°C. Let the beef rest for 10 minutes.

Sweet Potato & Carrot Mash:

Peel two large sweet potato and two carrots cut into 1 inch cubes, cook until tender.
Mash with fork and add ¼ cup of melted butter and salt, nutmeg to taste.

Turnip Salad

Eight small 1 ½ inch turnips, cook until tender, cool and peel. Slice into thin slices and toss lightly with grape seed oil, vinegar, salt and pepper and fresh chopped herbs.

Horseradish Aioli

Add 2 tbsp of finely grated horseradish to ½ cup of mayonnaise.

Rainbow Chard

Toss Rainbow chard with olive oil and grill for 5 minutes.

Arrange the mash and place the beef on top. Place the grilled chard beside this with the salad and aioli resting beside the beef.

Blissful Galettes

bison sausage and asparagus

from Bliss Bakery

Makes 8 Galettes

INGREDIENTS:

white or whole wheat bread flour • 4 cups
white sugar • ¼ cup
milk powder • 5 tsp
butter or non-hydrogenated margarine • ½ cup
instant yeast • 1 ¾
eggs • 2
cold water • 1 cup
bison sausage • 1 pound
fresh asparagus • 24 – 32 stalks
medium onion, diced • 1
crumbled blue cheese • 300 grams
cherry tomatoes • 24
fresh rosemary • 4 sprigs
olive oil (pure or extra virgin) • ¼ cup
eggs • 1
coarse sea salt and pepper • pinch (optional)
grated parmesan • ¼ cup (optional)

METHOD:

Whisk the yeast with the cold water and let sit for 10 minutes. Add all ingredients (including yeast and water) to a mixer fitted with a dough hook. Mix on low speed for 3-4 minutes until well incorporated. Increase mixer speed to medium and mix for three minutes until dough is smooth and sticky. Knead the dough on a flour surface, folding the dough several times. Be aggressive with the dough, pound it, hit it, this will build strength in the dough. The total kneading time should be about 4-5 minutes.

Place the well kneaded or mixed dough into a large oiled container and cover. Let the dough sit in the container at room temperature for 1 ½ - 2 hours.

Heat a frypan on medium heat along with the oil. Add the sausage meat and onions. Stir frequently to break up the sausage meat. Cook the meat until it is well browned and the onions have started to soften. Drain the meat mixture in a sieve and chill the meat several hours or overnight in the fridge.

Blanch the asparagus for a few minutes in boiling water. Make sure to remove the woody ends. Cool the asparagus on paper towels in the refrigerator.

Lightly flour a clean smooth surface. Put the well rested galette dough on a lightly floured surface and fold in all 4 sides, pressing down on the dough to "de-gas" it. Flip the dough over; the dough should resemble a lightly floured, smooth ball. Divide the dough into 8 roughly equal pieces. Form each of these pieces into small balls and let rest on the floured surface for 15-20 minutes.

Lightly oil 2 cookie sheets or line the sheets with silicone sheets.

When the galette dough balls are well rested, press each ball down into a disc. Mould each disc into a circle approximately 8-9 inches across. Use just enough flour to stop the dough sticking to the surface.

Lightly brush the outer 1 inch of each circle of dough with egg wash. Lightly brush the inner part of the circle with olive oil.

Arrange the sausage mixture over the dough, followed by the asparagus, cherry tomatoes(cut side up) and finish off with the blue cheese and rosemary.

Fold the sides of each galette to contain the toppings.

Lightly egg wash the section of dough that has been folded over and sprinkle lightly with coarse sea salt and pepper, or freshly grated parmesan, or leave plain.

Carefully transfer the galettes to the cookie sheets.

Let the galettes sit at room temperature for approximately 40 minutes until the dough starts to rise and is springy to the touch.

Warm the oven to 350 degrees. Put the cookie sheets in the oven and bake for 12-15 minutes until the crust is golden brown.

Summertime Pasta

with cherry tomatoes, basil and fresh parmesan

from Whitewater Cooks at Home

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

½ cup (125 ml) olive oil
6 garlic cloves, crushed
1 basket cherry tomatoes cut in half or 2 cups (500 ml)
Chopped fresh tomatoes
2 tsp (10 ml) sea salt
1 tsp (5 ml) black pepper
2 cups (500 ml) fresh basil, chopped
1 cup (250 ml) parmesan cheese, freshly grated
1 package (500 g) spaghetti or angel hair pasta

METHOD:

Heat olive oil in frying pan over medium low heat and add garlic.
Cook just for a few seconds, mostly to infuse the oil with the garlic.
Transfer oil and garlic to a large bowl and add the tomatoes, salt, pepper and basil
Cover and let the tomato mixture sit at room temperature for at least a few hours. We often do this step in the morning of the day we want to serve it.
Cook and drain the pasta.
Add the pasta to the tomato mixture and toss to combine.
Serve with freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

We usually serve this pasta at room temperature after the warm pasta has soaked up all the goodness of the lovely tomato juices and garlicky olive oil. After you've made this a few times you'll start to improvise: goat cheese, asiago or a Brie would all be fantastic additions.

Goat Cheese and Sun-Dried Tomato Terrine

from Whitewater Cooks at Home

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

8 oz (250 g) soft goat cheese
¼ cup (60 ml) chopped oil packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained
½ cup (125 ml) pesto sauce, store bought or homemade
½ cup (125 ml) fresh parsley, chopped
½ cup (125 ml) fresh basil, chopped
1 tsp (5 ml) pepper, freshly ground
2 tbsp (30 ml) balsamic crema or balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp (30 ml) pine nuts, toasted
½ cup (125 ml) pitted calamata olives
½ (125 ml) caperberries

METHOD:

Beat the goat cheese until it's a little fluffy and smooth. You can do this with a bowl and wooden spoon or a mixer.
Spread half of the cheese on the serving plate then cover with the sun-dried tomatoes then the pesto and half of the herbs.
Spread the rest of the cheese on top.
Cover tightly with plastic wrap and press down gently to compress the layers a bit. Refrigerate until just before serving.
When you're ready to serve, sprinkle with remaining herbs and pepper. Drizzle the balsamic crema and the olive oil. Scatter the pine nuts on top and put the olives and caperberries around.

You can assemble this right on a serving platter or in a small 6 inch (15 cm) removable bottomed tart pan. Just line the part pan with plastic wrap and assemble it so that the bottom becomes the top when you invert it on to your serving plate.

Chicken Saltimbocca

from Whitewater Cooks at Home

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

Six medium sized chicken breast, boneless, skinless
1 tsp (5 ml) salt
1 tsp (5 ml) pepper
12 fresh sage leaves
6 prosciutto slices, big enough to wrap each chicken breast
¼ cup (60 ml) olive oil
½ cup (125 ml) marsala, wine or port
Juice of 1 lemon

METHOD:

Place Chicken breasts on work surface and season with salt and pepper.

Put 2 sage leave on top of each breast.

Wrap a slice of prosciutto around each breast, covering the sage leaves and overlapping the ends of the prosciutto. Skewer with a toothpick.

Heat oil in large ovenproof sauté pan over medium heat. Place chicken in a pan and just cook until seared and brown on each side.

Finish cooking in 350°F (180°C) oven, for about 15-20 minutes, or until juices run clear out of chicken.

Remove the chicken from the oven and return the pan to the stovetop over medium heat.

Add the wine and let it "deglaze" the pan. Stir in the lemon juice and remove from heat.

Slice the chicken on the diagonal for a pretty presentation.

Pour the pan sauce over the top of the chicken.

We recommend serving this with the Summertime Pasta.

Summer Cake with Nectarines

from Whitewater Cooks at Home

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup (250 ml) flour
¼ cup (60 ml) cornmeal
1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
½ tsp (2 ml) salt
½ cup butter
1 cup (250 ml) sugar
3 large eggs
1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
Zest of 1 lemon
3 firm but ripe nectarines
1tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
2 tbsp (30 ml) brown sugar
1 tbsp (15 ml) white sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C)
Prepare a 10 inch (22.5 cm) springform pan or an 8 inch (20 cm) square glass pan by greasing and lining the bottom with parchment paper.
Sift together the flour, cornmeal, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
Cream the butter and sugar together in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time; add the lemon juice and zest.
Add the dry ingredients and mix until just combined.
Spread the batter evenly into your prepared cake pan.
Cut the nectarines in half and remove the pits. Cut each half into 6 wedges.
Toss the fruit with 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice.
Place the nectarines in a pretty pattern in your cake pan by starting at the outside of the cake and working around to the centre. Place the fruit in rows if you are using a square pan.
Mix the sugars and cinnamon together and sprinkle on top of the cake.
Bake for 40 minutes until a wooden skewer comes out clean.
Cool completely before slicing.

This Simple cake is great served with some good vanilla ice cream or lightly whipped cream.

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THE MARKET AT SPIRIT RIDGE

By Roslyne Buchanan

A welcoming oasis in the desert, this enchanting deli/coffee shop will delight and refresh weary wanderers and Spirit Ridge guests alike. Here in the cafe bistro, owned by Paul LaGrange, you will find many fine foods from the kitchen of his acclaimed Passa Tempo restaurant. Consistent with the philosophy at Passa Tempo, there is a focus on regional and seasonal cuisine drawing on the freshest ingredients from local farmers and producers. Enjoy baked goods, preserves, quiche of the day, noodles, pizza, cheese and crackers, meats, deli sandwiches, specialty coffees and teas, beer, wine and coolers in this relaxed setting or pack up a meal for your room, a picnic or home.

The Market also offers gourmet specialties that capitalize on Okanagan bounty such as delicate jars of Gold Tomato Puree, Chutney, Antipasto, Mulled Plum Jam, and Hot Sauce as well as an array of The Vinegar Works dressings and marinades. If your travels have you craving a simple bag of chips, candy bar or pop, you'll find a good selection of that, too.

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THE BENCH ARTISAN FOOD MARKET

By Roslyne Buchanan

The Bench, owned by passionate foodie sisters Dawn Lennie and Debbie Halliday, is a Mecca whether you're in Penticton or touring the fabulous Naramata Bench wineries.

The mantra instilled in all staff is friendly service of fresh local, healthy and sustainable selections with menu items made from scratch on site. Chef Stewart Glynes, who joined the team in January from Vancouver, fully embraces this approach and the first bite of the creations from the kitchen confirms it. A wise choice for a light breakfast, coffee or gourmet lunch, the Bench also offers take-home dinners, gift baskets and catering. Choose from home-made granola, yogurt, scones, soups, salads, artisan pastas and sauces, appetizers such as salad rolls, crab cakes, meatballs and vegetable tarts, panini and other gourmet sandwiches, pizza, shepherd's pie, enchiladas and desserts. The store stocks an extensive selection of organic grains, lentils, beans, spices and baking ingredients and locally produced items such as Poplar Grove cheeses and Naramustard. Summerland's organic Backyard Beans coffees are favoured in the Bench's barista bar. Whether you settle into the cozy bistro, nab a patio seat or grab food to go, the Bench will keep your seat warm until you return. And, you will.

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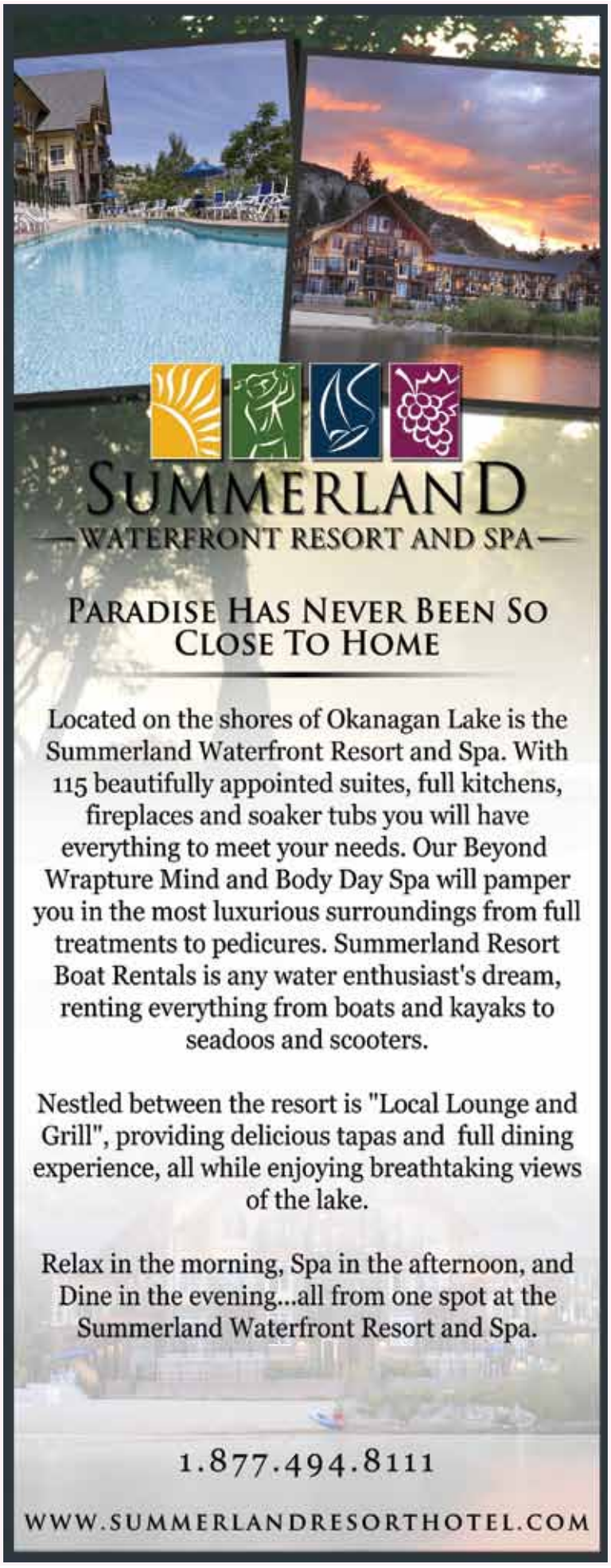
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Photo: SHAWN TALBOT

BAMBOO BEACH FUSION GRILLE

By Dona Sturmanis

If you are in Vernon and like made-from-scratch Asian food with a twist, this is your culinary stop. Japanese chef Yuki Takeyuchi combines eastern and western flavours to deliver a non-traditional lunch and dinner menu.

After three years at the Tiki Village Motel, the Bamboo Beach Fusion Grille moved to 3313 30th Avenue, Vernon's Main Street. It has a calming, Zen-like atmosphere, but it's always busy, with a host of regulars and new fans. Reservations are recommended.

Lunch features, among other specialties, include Ramen noodle salad, Japanese tempura and a unique Thai sub with beef or chicken, lettuce, tomato, cilantro and a spicy Asian mayonnaise. You're well fed for $9-$15.

For dinner, entrees include seafood such as Thai halibut, baked in a red curry sauce, Japanese tuna steak or Alaskan black cod in yuzu (a Japanese citrus fruit) soy sauce. Also popular are an Asian-style pork burger with a teriyaki miso glaze, and a marinated New York strip loin steak, prepared in a soy-balsamic reduction. These superb Asian repasts are extremely reasonable for $9-$26.

Co-owner Amanda Thompson met chef Yuki, who was cooking in the family Osaka seafood restaurant, while teaching in Japan. After Amanda attended pastry and baking arts school in Vancouver, the two decided to start Bamboo Beach Fusion Grille.

"It's a family thing. My brother and I work out in the front. Yuki and some Japanese women work in the back. It's a really good atmosphere," says Amanda.

3313 30th Avenue, Vernon
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Saturdays, dinner only; Sunday lunch only
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KITCHENETTE AT SILK SCARF WINERY

By Dona Sturmanis

Imagine sitting on a deck with friends, taking in a stunning lake view while eating freshly-prepared appetizers and small, colourful dishes specifically created to complement the wine you've chosen to drink. This is exactly what you'll find at the Silk Scarf Winery kitchenette in Summerland, but it's an elusive experience—it's only open weekend afternoons from Spring Wine Festival to Fall Wine Festival, only accommodates 25 people at a time, and is so popular you'll want to make reservations well in advance.

Depending on the selection of Silk Scarf's renowned wines you choose to try, Chef Tara Buchman will create different dishes to go with them, served tapas-style in small bowls and serving plates. They might include grilled peppers and eggplant in capers and red wine vinegar marinade, fresh peas, mint and olive oil spread, smoked salmon terrine with sour cream and garden chives or Baharat marinated chicken skewers with yogurt and tarragon radishes. The menu is different each day. It's an exquisite experience for only $28 a person.

Tara Buchman was a chef in Israel and is partners with Roie Manoff who, with his family, owns Silk Scarf Winery. The winery is named Silk Scarf in recognition of the flamboyant scarves worn by pilots as Roie spent many years as a fighter pilot with the Israeli Air Force.

Photo: SILKSCARF WINERY

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GO GELATO!

Happily, you don't need to travel to Italy to get it.

By Roslyne Buchanan

here in wine country you can choose from a number of artisan gelaterias. The toughest decision is which flavour, so why limit yourself? Gelato contains less butterfat than traditional ice cream. so select several heavenly blends. The gelato and sorbetto makers listed share great pride in sourcing the finest ingredients and when possible, from Okanagan orchards, farms, vineyards and producers.

OSOYOOS GELATO

Robert Klei celebrated the fifth season of his successful gelato business in a new location. While fans pursued this delicacy in the old site, this Main Street space near the beach offers better access for resort traffic. You can also find Osoyoos Gelato at some restaurants and artisan markets. Flavours rotate seasonally from a veteran repertoire of 60 with 24 presented at a time. Robert's science background assists in his formulation of base mixes, while 15 years at the flourishing Calgary Flower Cottage, which he owned with wife, Gwen, before moving to the Okanagan in 1999, aids in artistic flair and customer care. Evident in creations such as blackberry merlot is Robert's six years working at Tinhorn Creek Vineyards.

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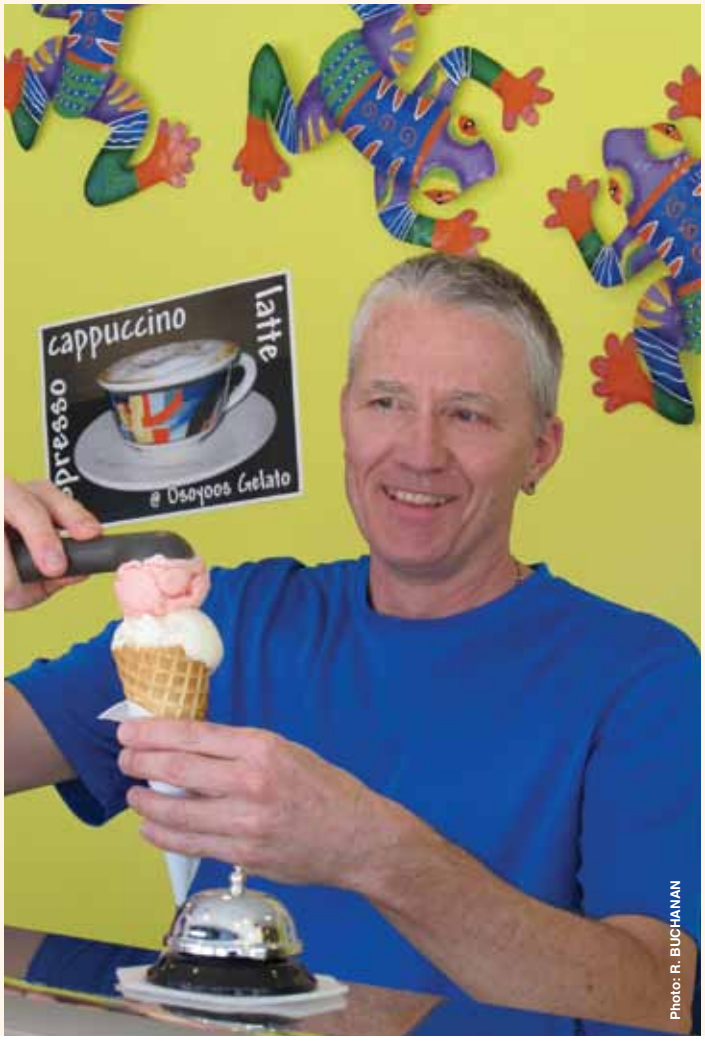
250.495.5425(LICK)
www.osoyoosgelato.com



Robert Kleis scoops a Gelato cone.

Photo: R. BUCHANAN

Gelato heaven in a converted church.

MEDICI'S GELATERIA

While many of Oliver's attractions pulse along Highway 97, take a turn at 350 Avenue to discover your inner child and a European flair a few blocks up at Medici's. Silvia Badger grew up in Europe with a deep appreciation for the finest gelato, so after 18 years at the Oliver Chronicle, she and husband, David, designed a unique coffee shop and trained with an Italian mentor in Vancouver to make gelato and sorbetto in house. Medici's, which opened May 2010, is already a local favourite with regulars eagerly sampling a variety of Italian-tagged tastes such as panna cotta, tiramisu, caffe, nocciola (hazelnut), vaniglia (vanilla), and limone (lemon).

9932 350 Avenue, Oliver
Monday to Saturday, 8 am - 6 pm; Sunday, 10 am - 6 pm (To be extended summer)
250.498.2228
www.medicisgelateria.ca

ANNAGRET'S CHOCOLATES

Renowned for crafting supreme European-style chocolates in the Okanagan for eight years and previously on Vancouver Island for 15, Annagret's presents hand-made gelato from April to October. With husband Robert overseeing the bustling storefront, Annegret Jung takes sublime pleasure in crafting her array of gelato, certified and organic, made from real milk with as many local fruits and products as accessible. When she has to go afield for certain components, she ensures that no artificial preservatives are used and selects only the best products. For example, the hazelnut paste comes from Italy.

Town Centre Mall
19, 565 Bernard Avenue, Kelowna
Monday to Saturday, 10 am - 5:30 pm
250.712.2229
www.townecentremall.com/annegrets.html

Annegret Jung creates chocolate Gelato.

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Goat Gelato!

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Here you can taste gelato with all the goodness of goats' milk made in the traditional way with premium ingredients. This rich, dense and intensely flavoured gelato is unlike your standard American-style ice cream. Chocolate hazelnut is the best seller, but you can choose from about 24 flavours such as coconut, mango, vanilla bourbon, maple walnut, blueberry, crème brulee and strawberry. While you are at this charming market atmosphere and visitor centre, take a tour of Ofri and Ofer Barmor family's dairy, snap a photo of the goats, see how the products are made, nibble on the variety of handcrafted goat cheeses and buy items for your picnic or dinner table.

170 Timberline Road, Kelowna
May 1 to October 31, 10 am - 6 pm daily
250.764-9033
www.carmelisgoatcheese.com

Gelato by the cup.

So you want to be a Sommelier?

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www.internationalsommelier.com
Information: Ingo Grady - igrady@missionhillwinery.com

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FEED THE VALLEY

www.feedthevalley.ca

book reviews

By Lisa Harrison

Book title: Whitewater Cooks at Home

Author: Shelley Adams

Published by Shelley Adams

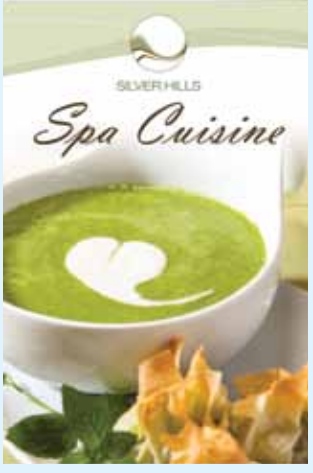
Softcover

Available at Save-on-Foods, www.chapters.ca, www.sandhillbooks.com, Whitewater Ski Resort in Nelson and numerous BC locations listed at www.whitewatercooks.com

$34.95

Sumptuous photography, unexpected combinations and clear instructions coax readers of Whitewater Cooks at Home to put on an apron and dip a ladle into new culinary adventures. And what an adventure it's been for author Shelley Adams. Trained in Paris, she spent 15 years as a movie-industry caterer then headed Fresh Tracks Café at the Whitewater Resort. In this, her second book, Adams shares a few of her formerly secret recipes, new creations and contributions from friends. Many recipes are ideal for summer, including her fresh arugula salad with a few twists: sheep's milk Manchego and quince jelly dressing. As crisp as a new snowfall at her cherished Nelson, BC resort, meringues are a crunchy counterpart to whipped cream and the succulent fruits of summer. Fresh basil infusion livens up chocolate crème brûlée. Her goat-cheese terrine with sun-dried tomatoes and pesto is quick and flavourful.

(See recipes pages 59–62)



Book title: Silver Hills Spa Cuisine

Authors: Eileen Brewer and Cecile Gordon

Published by Eileen Brewer and Cecile Gordon

Softcover

Available from Mosaic Books and www.silverhills.ca

$26.95

Vegans and vegetarians take heart. Flavour is on the menu at the Silver Hills Heath Centre and Spa and in 200 recipes in their latest book. Chef Cecile Gordon and co-founder Eileen Brewer have pampered and nourished hundreds of guests during their seven-year collaboration. This collection contains their most popular milk-, egg- and meat-free favourites. Although soy mayonnaise and butter without cream may have some people scratching their heads, those with food allergies embrace them out of necessity. These modern inventions are essential ingredients in Savoury Scones topped with onions and herbs as well as a tasty Red Pepper Aioli used for grilled sandwiches and as a dip for yam fries. As expected, a spa excels at salads. Arizona Salad with jicama, avocados and mango, and Grape and Broccoli Salad are sweet alternatives to leafy greens. Although photographs are few, the spiral binding holds open the page while cooks prepare real spa food at home.

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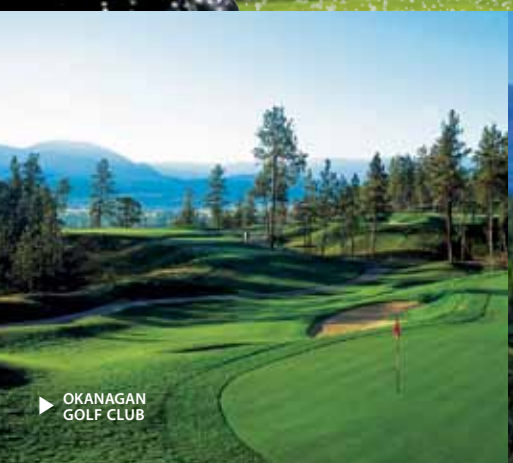

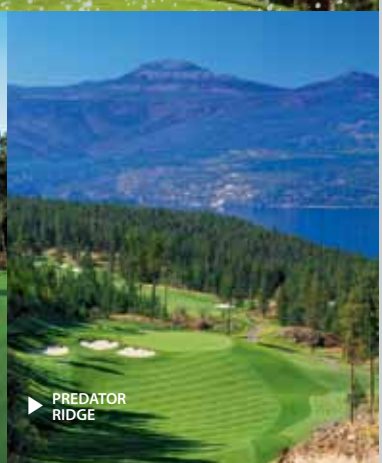

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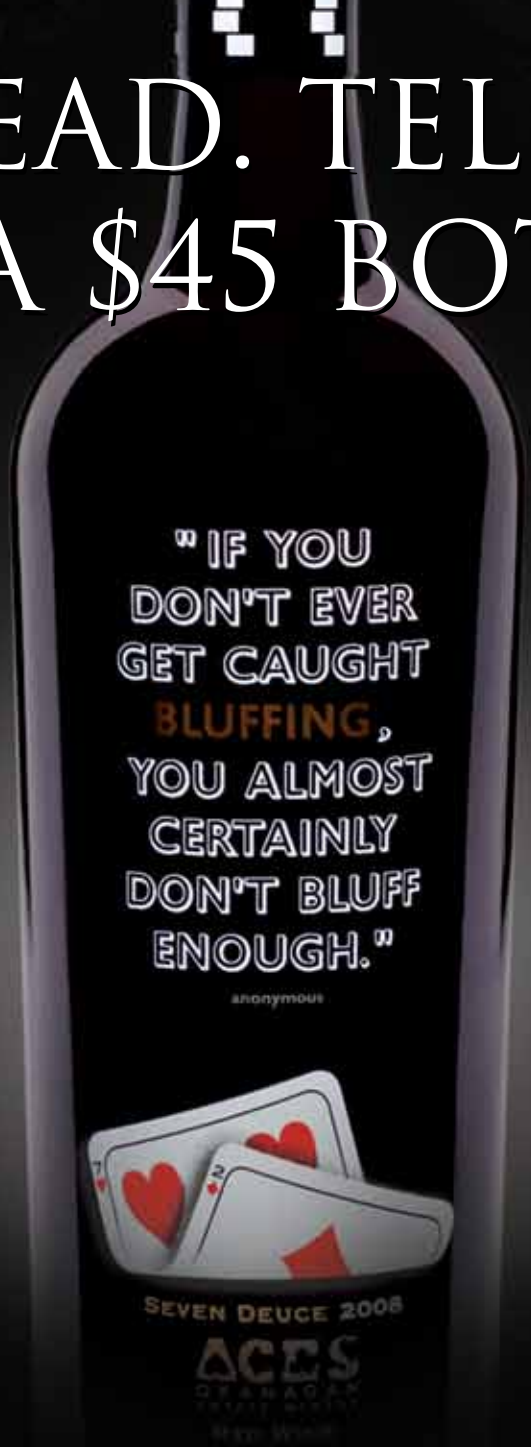

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